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ABCD's physiotherapist Raia with Akram at Nour Shams centre

Lara Madge, runner, ABCD marathon organiser, social media and fundraising administrator reports on ABCD's Palestine Marathon Visit (29 March - 2 April, 2017):

In our most ambitious fundraiser to date, ABCD has a team of adventurous people including trustees taking part in the Palestine Marathon on 31st March, 2017

Trustees Firas Sarhan, Jane Lavers, Anthony Glaister, Val Jourdan plus filmmaker Gina Fontanini and I formed part of the group, Gina generously filming ABCD's work as a gift to the charity. Family and friends brought the numbers up to seventeen. Our mission? To take part in the Palestine Marathon and raise

funds for ABCD projects. As well as the marathon, we visited many of ABCD's projects, outlined in the bulletin.

The Marathon: Wearing our ABCD T-shirts, the 17-strong team assembled in Bethlehem's famed Manger Square by 7.30 am, meeting BASR (Bethlehem Arab Society for Rehabilitation) staff and

Contact us

- (44) 01689 822 259
- info@abcdbethlehem.org
- https://twitter.com/abcd_bethlehem
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<http://www.abcdbethlehem.org>

ABCD is dedicated to improving the quality of life of those children and young adults who suffer from physical, mental and psychological disabilities in Palestinian Territories. ABCD sponsors treatment for those in need regardless of gender, race or creed, helping them to reach their full potential, to live life with dignity and to take their rightful place in their community.



Part of the ABCD team, a mix of runners and walkers



180 disabled participants, some 6,000 taking part. The atmosphere was electric and fighting through the crowds of well-wishers, we set off at our own pace, some running a half marathon, the rest of our group walking the 10 km circuit. The route? Through Old Bethlehem from

the Church of the Nativity, past the Separation Wall and British artist Banksy's newly-opened and thought-provoking Walled Off Hotel wedged up against the Israeli security wall that wraps around Bethlehem. The hotel is aimed at attracting foreign visitors to a corner of the occupied West Bank where they might not usually stay, at once giving a badly-needed boost to the Palestinian economy and showing them the realities of life surrounded by the wall. Banksy's art is prominent. an "open-hearted community resource" not allied to any political party or pressure group. We finally passed two of Bethlehem's refugee camps Aida and Deheisheh. It was amazing, eye opening – and WE DID IT! Gina documented the event (see the film online shortly) which saw us walking or running a total of 240 km in less than three hours. Athletes we are not! But it was a wonderful feeling of achievement and also very moving to take part in an event amongst the very people we are able to help and a stone's throw from the centre in Beit Jala that supports them.

The atmosphere was electric and fighting through the crowds of well-wishers, we set off at our own pace

THANK YOU

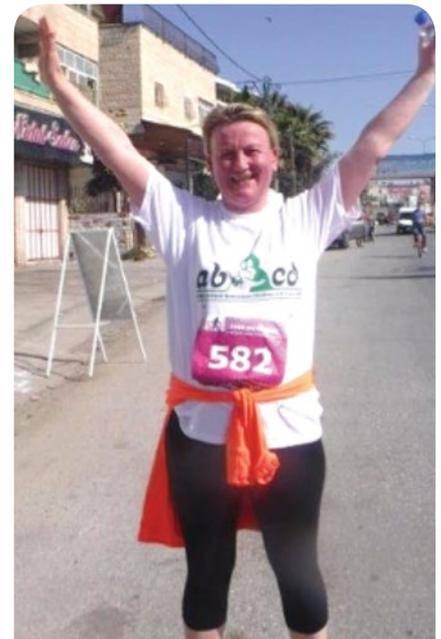
At the time of writing we have raised over £15,000 via several donation pages but you can still donate online, the Virgin Giving pages open until June.

<http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fundraiser-web/fundraiser/showFundraiserProfilePage.action?userUrl=bethlehemmarathon>

Or send your donation to
 ABCD,
 48 Strickland Way, Orpington, Kent BR6 9UE
 Many thanks for your kind-heartedness



The group with Edmund Shehadeh at centre (in blue shirt)



Lara Madge, ABCD team organiser

We spent the afternoon at The Bethlehem Arab Society Rehabilitation Centre in Beit Jala, Edmond Shehadeh, founder and director showing us around. We had the opportunity to see the progress of the Sensory Garden which ABCD is funding as part of the Georgina Mortimer Memorial and other parts of the remarkable centre, enlightening and very moving for those who had not previously visited. We heard about the types of disabilities that are encountered, many of them caused by the lack of medical care and facilities and

Two years ago we refurbished and helped to staff the rehabilitation centre with equipment vital to encourage development of movement such as climbing bars, walking galley, mats, balls and mirrors and also a treatment exerciser.

the dum dum bullets (projectiles designed to expand on impact) used within the West Bank. It's a hard life that is seen etched on the

faces of all of those we met, most of whom are not allowed to leave Palestine – or unable to.

We also visited ABCD's two other major projects. Firas, Gina and I spent the first day at Nour Shams Refugee Camp, in North West Palestine. As Palestinian-born Firas does not have a permit to pass through Jerusalem an hour's detour was necessary, the roads incorporating the Valley of Hell (Valley of Hinnom) a 10 mile stretch of hairpin bends zig zagging down steep mountains. Two years ago we refurbished and helped to staff the rehabilitation centre with equipment vital to encourage development of movement such as climbing bars, walking galley, mats, balls and mirrors and also a treatment exerciser. A physiotherapist, speech therapist and occupational therapist daily see a range of children from babies to teens with conditions such



Emma Jones, runner for ABCD, raised over £1,000



Children from the camps in the treatment programme

as cerebral palsy, autism, Downs' Syndrome and those with amputated limbs. A local television network filmed the exchanging of the five-year contracts between the centre and ABCD, a sense of achievement and joy felt by all, particularly by Nehayah, the centre's head and her therapy staff who discussed problems and further needs with the ABCD team.

Jalazone Refugee Camp: We visited this camp the following day which ABCD has refurbished, equipped and staffed to run their essential centre for rehabilitation similar to Nour Shams. The camp is crowded, has little in the way of sanitation, power and water can be sporadic and the roads and alleys are uneven and dusty, making wheelchair use virtually impossible. As per our visit to Nour Shams, we discussed problems and further needs with Mizuan, the centre's head and her therapy staff, also exchanging five-year contracts. These visits were an eye opener for those who had not been to a refugee camp before and to experience, first hand, what day-to-day life is like for



residents and their families, some now here for decades.

We returned back to the UK after our four day stay. The Palestinian people are so warm and generous and live their lives with such dignity that you can't help feel we are missing something here in the West. We were so fortunate to have film-maker Gina with us, our thanks to her and to all who donated their time and money for ABCD's work.

Lara Madge – April 2017

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AND WHY WE AND OUR SUPPORTERS ALL DO THIS...

Training Programme for Therapists and Health Workers in the Management of Children with Cerebral Palsy:



Lesley Gillon with students the Centre in Jalazone

In November, 2016, ABCD's Project Manager, Firas Sarhan, together with two highly professional independent physiotherapists Lesley Gillon and Alice Inman planned and constructed a two-week training course for the medical staff of Jalazone and Nour Shams' refugee camps and other medical practitioners in the area. Lesley is Chair of ADAPT, a professional network of physiotherapists in International Health and Development. Twelve participants attended and found it hugely beneficial to enable them to pass on

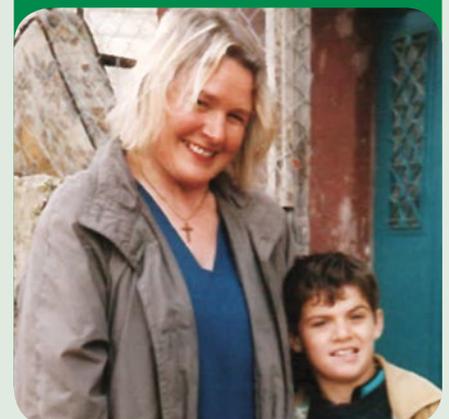


Practical demonstration by Alice Inman

their newly acquired expertise to help children in the area. ABCD is grateful to Lesley and Alice who donated their time and expertise. Due to the success of the course, ABCD is committed to run courses to include further therapeutic skills every year.

Georgina Mortimer Appeal:

Georgina, past chair and co-founder of ABCD, died far too early in June, 2016. In her name, the Georgina Mortimer Appeal was launched to create a sensory roof garden at BASR's new children's ward in Beit Jala and interactive educational sensory rooms for the two refugee camps ABCD works with, the total target £50,000 which was raised in record time. Playgrounds for Palestine (www.playgroundsforpalestine.org) has also generously donated £1,000 for equipment. We'll keep you posted on the development of these sensory spaces which will aid traumatised children. Georgina's memorial service was held at St. James's, Piccadilly, on January 28, 2017. Please listen to the moving service on www.abcdbethlehem.org/georgina-mortimer if you are able to.



Help us to achieve this by your sponsorship:
www.abcdbethlehem.org

OCTOBER 2016 FIELD TRIP:

Firas Sarhan led the three-strong group, Lara Madge, Social Media and Fundraising Administrator, Bridget Cowan, trustee and journalist and Carol Godsmark, PR and writer and newly appointed trustee for fact-finding at Nour Shams and Al Jalazone camps. They also visited the BASR hospital in Bethlehem. Part of their combined report is on the website. If you would like to learn more please visit ABCD's website – www.abcdbethlehem.org

It was a very successful trip, not least for making Lara, Bridget and Carol more aware of how difficult life is for ABCD children and getting the know the people as well as the projects that ABCD funds. It served too to report findings to trustees to enable them to decide on tactics and target funding. The projects that started two years ago in Jalazone and Nour Shams are already hugely beneficial to the children, their families and the communities in which they live. It

is now necessary to fine-tune those projects to ensure they give maximum benefit, every opportunity utilised. Continual assessment and communication is the key. It is also vital to look at how the camps can become more self-sufficient to ensure longevity of the centres. ABCD needs ensure that all of our partners work together to their mutual benefit, making ABCD's funding go further and to ensure they feel supported, partly by improved communication. Our thanks go to all



who showed us around the camps and BASR and other communities we visited.

Jalazone and Nour Shams Camps: We welcome specific donations to help both of these camps' rehabilitation centres such as upgrading staff and training - £200 per month – and providing equipment such as technical aids, educational toys and colouring books.

BASR: We also require backing for vital music and drama therapy at the Bethlehem Arab Society for Rehabilitation as well as crucial outreach funding for occupational and physiotherapy staff, currently under great strain, two staff only to deal with so many housebound children unable to access the centres.

For more details see file:

<http://www.abcdbethlehem.org/recent-field-visits>

or contact our administrator Alison for our needs on 01689 822259

The projects that started two years ago in Jalazone and Nour Shams are already hugely beneficial to the children



Children being treated by physiotherapy and speech and language methods



WE'D LOVE YOU TO LEND A HAND

If you'd like to do something fun, challenging or different why not raise money at the same time for ABCD?

If you're short of ideas why not click our link below for our A-Z of fundraising fun <http://www.abcdbethlehem.org/get-involved>. If you'd like help with your activity just let us know. We can publicise your event for you, help you with a fundraising page or offer tips and advice on how to make the most of your adventure. All of our contact details are on our

CONTACT US page. Or call or write to Alison Driscoll (01689 822259) 48 Strickland Way, Orpington, Kent BR6 9UE who can guide you.

We have a small Palestinian range of gifts to buy as well as 2017 Christmas cards by September.

To order simply click on the link: <http://www.abcdbethlehem.org/shop>

As part of our Social Media work we hope to reduce our printing and postage costs by the use of electronic mail. Please send your email address to lara@abcdbethlehem.org but we will happily continue to send you information by post if this is your preferred route.

By linking social media and fundraising, this is an exceptional, instantaneous way of creating a new fundraising avenue.

Through initiatives such as Give As You Live, ABCD is able to raise more money to improve the lives of so many children with disabilities.

If you haven't already, please follow us on our social media journey. We'd love to have you with us. Alternatively, see Alison's address above to donate.

-  www.facebook.com/abcdbethlehem
-  www.twitter.com/abcd_bethlehem
-  www.linkedin.com/abcdbethlehem
-  www.instagram.com/abcdbethlehem5414



ABCD Outreach child, Ghayda, in the Bethlehem area

Fundraising

Our grateful thanks go to St. Augustine's Church, Downend, Bristol which adopted ABCD as their international project for 2016. They held numerous fundraising events to promote and raise funds for the charity. The total raised was a remarkable £3,297.72 by a quiz; a sponsored walk; cupcake sales. Bravo to all involved, in particular Maureen Merrifield, the co-ordinator of events. See the cake below for one of the events.

ABCD has been invited to participate in the 2017 Methodists for World Mission Conference to take place 2nd to 4th June at the Swanwick Conference Centre in Derbyshire. The theme for the weekend is 'Moving People: Moving Stories', and is focusing on

issues of refugees and migration. On the Saturday afternoon, our administrator, Alison Driscoll, will be leading a workshop detailing ABCD's projects in the refugee camps. All are very welcome to attend – we look forward to seeing you.

If you are interested please contact Alison by email info@abcdbethlehem.org or telephone 01689 822259.



HONORARY TREASURER: STOP PRESS !! After many years of friendly and painstaking attention to ABCD's accounts, René, our Honorary Treasurer will be retiring at the end of the year.

We are therefore seeking a new Hon. Treasurer from January 1st 2018.

If you would be interested in helping ABCD in this way, know of someone who might or would like further information about this important role, please be in touch with Val Jourdan via email val@abcdbethlehem.org



Dedicated to improving the quality of life of disabled children in the West Bank.

The Child First and Always

93% of funds raised goes directly to their care

<http://www.abcdbethlehem.org>

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