

17th

Budapest Burns Supper

January 2021

21

2020 was not as we expected. With the tragic passing of Deputy-Head of Mission at the British Embassy and Curatorium member Steven Dick in March, this is perhaps somewhat of an understatement, and we are sorry we couldn't welcome everyone to the Corinthia Hotel for the 24th Annual Burns Supper as we would have liked. But that doesn't mean to say we didn't have a busy year, thanks to all your generosity in January 2020.

Despite the restrictions brought on by the pandemic we ploughed ahead with 10 projects in total, the most we've ever had.

The 2nd Department of Paediatrics in Tűzoltó utca, the Neonatal Department at the Children's Hospital in Péterfy Sándor utca, the Bajcsy-Zsilinszky Hospital in District 10, and the Bethesda Children's Hospital in District 14 were all beneficiaries of donated equipment in 2020.

As part of our SME Sponsorship Scheme, we again teamed up with Inter Relocation Kft. to support the hospital in Hódmezővásárhely in southern Hungary, and with FirstMed Centers to buy equipment for the Szent Rafael Hospital in Zalaegerszeg. We were delighted to welcome WhiskyNet as a new SME sponsor, and identified a worthy project with them in Debrecen, while real estate firm Norhot Kft. were also new joiners, and chose to support a key children's hospital in Székesfehérvár.

Two social projects rounded off our donations, we helped the Gyöngyvirág Children's Home again in Budapest's 18th district, buying many different items to increase the level of comfort in the home, and we contributed to The Nursery Project's latest initiative in Istenmezeje in north-eastern Hungary.



Here's hoping for a much better 2021, and we very much look forward to seeing you all for the 25th Annual Burns Supper in January 2022.

Douglas Arnott
Chairman of RBIF Curatorium



**Dear "GUESTS",
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I've written "guests" in capital letters to show that for us at the Robert Burns International Foundation, the participants in the Supper are extremely important to us, alongside our worthwhile goals and efforts. And the quotation marks signal that our guests are special this year, remote guests, thanks to the pandemic!

But we cannot celebrate our 25th anniversary Supper next year, in 2022, if we don't hold the 24th Burns Supper this year, even if it is in such an unusual format!

That is not the only reason of course! With the delicacies in the hampers, and revelling in the nostalgia of past Burns Supper events, we would like to inject a bit of joy and cheer into the lives of our past and future guests and supporters in these difficult times!

As founder I would like to thank the Curatorium led by Chairman Dougie Arnott, and the Organising Committee headed up by Lesley Füzes, with the Corinthia Hotel, the "home" of the Burns Supper, represented on the committee by Miklós Szekeres. It is thanks to their creativity and their dedicated work that we will have a Burns Supper at all this year, thank you!

I mentioned the number 25 in connection with the Supper, I should also mention that The Hungarian-Scottish Society, which started the Burns Supper tradition, will be 25 years old in May this year!

We are unable to really celebrate this just now, but we are working on renewing and modernising the organisation to pay tribute to this anniversary!

Finally, let me thank one of the most famous Scotsmen, Sir Alex Ferguson, who has been a huge help to us over more than a decade with his prestige and support. Sir Alex recently turned 79 on 31 December! Congratulations to him, and we wish him the best of health, especially under the current conditions!

All the Best,
Zoltán Magyar
*RBIF Founder and Founding President
of The Hungarian-Scottish Society*

The Péterfy Sándor Street Hospital, located in District 7, is one of Budapest's oldest and largest hospitals in Budapest with nearly 1,600 beds, where patients can be treated for many different ailments and conditions.

The neonatal wing is run by Dr Gábor Baross who, with the support of his team, can deal with anything between 500 and 600 premature babies every year with a maximum capacity to accommodate 20 to 30 babies at any one time.

This department of the hospital has been a beneficiary of support from the Robert Burns International Foundation for many years, and following the most recent donation of equipment received in 2019, a further easing and enabling of the teams to work with premature babies, was planned in 2020. The funds provided by the Foundation made the departments work easier and the care of premature babies became safer. During the year the department's wards were renovated and the "kis-mama" rooms were redecorated. Further donations also enabled replacement of the old workstations of the preterm-infant nurses, providing them with modern, much more practical and comfortable ones.

According to Gábor Boross, "This not only means better working conditions for the nurses and employees, it also helps ensure safer patient care."

Completing the year's donation also provided for 3 Mindray uMEC 10-12 monitors complete with stands and accessories for them. These monitors are fixtures in the department and are used on a daily basis. In past years the RBIF has donated several monitors of this type, and they have proven their reliability with easy and user-friendly operation. Their constant usage dictates that over time they need to be replaced, and thanks to the generosity of the guests and sponsors of the annual Burns Supper the Robert Burns International Foundation is able to help make sure that the department always has the necessary number of functional and reliable equipment at its disposal.





The Robert Burns International Foundation has donated equipment to the 2nd Department of Paediatrics at Semmelweis University in Tűzoltó utca every year since the roots of the Foundation were laid in 1998.

Following in his late father's footsteps, Professor Dr. György Fekete led the 2nd Department until his semi-retirement in 2009. Author of 118 paediatric publications with 1034 citations, we are proud that he continues to advise the Foundation each year on deserving causes for the support of sick and underprivileged children around Hungary. In such capacities, he has long been recognised as one of the country's unsung heroes for sick children.

In 2010, recommended by the British Embassy, Professor Fekete led the highly successful Royal Visit of the Duchess of Cornwall and the British Ambassador around this department. The Foundation is lucky to continue to be advised by a man of such professional international standing and integrity.

This year, the second department requested Electro-Thermal Bipolar Vessel Sealing (EBVS) equipment for electro surgery. This is used for sealing blood vessels of up to 7mm in diameter.

"The devices fuse vessel walls and create seals using a combination of electrical current and mechanical pressure, creating strong seals via the targeted, feedback-controlled delivery of compression and heat, resulting in significantly less intraoperative and postoperative bleeding". – Dr. Zoltán Jenővári, Head of Surgery.

Long overdue in SOTE II, the technology was originally introduced in 1998 and since then has been used widely for a variety of laparoscopic and open surgical procedures worldwide, making them safer and more efficient. The procedure especially benefits children with challenging tumours.

Dr. Jenővári added:

"We are extremely pleased that the Foundation supported the acquisition of these devices which provide much help in improving the surgical treatment of hundreds of our patients every year. Our grateful thanks in the name of the patients and surgeons as well."

Every year the Robert Burns International Foundation encourages small and medium-sized businesses to get involved in our charity work by means of the SME Sponsorship Scheme.

Running for several years now, this scheme enables companies to make targeted donations to specific projects helping sick and underprivileged children around the country. What is more, the sponsor in question can choose which part of the country they wish to support.

WhiskyNet need no introduction to those who are familiar with the Annual Budapest Burns Supper. A long-standing and successful company ensuring Hungary is well supplied with the finest whiskies that Scotland and the world has to offer, not to mention a fine supply of gins and rums, the owners Zsolt and Kati contacted the RBIF in early 2020 with their intention to join the SME Sponsorship Scheme. After identifying eastern Hungary as their preferred area, and following the advice of our medical adviser Prof. György Fekete, we settled on the Neonatal Intensive Centre at the Debrecen University Clinical Centre.

Discussions with Head Physician Tamás Kovács resulted in the choice of equipment being a Novos Bililed Maxi device, which is used for the phototherapy treatment of jaundice in newborn babies.

Jaundice is a common phenomenon in the days immediately after birth; it is generally mild, and soon passes by itself. However, high levels of bilirubin in the blood can cause the jaundice to more pronounced, leading to drowsiness, eating difficulties and therefore dehydration. In some cases jaundice can be a symptom of more extreme underlying diseases, which in turn can cause brain damage and/or require blood transfusions.

Head Physician Tamás Kovács:

“This device purchased with the help of the Robert Burns International Foundation is very effective and can be used continuously. It converts the bilirubin in the skin making it easier to travel harmlessly through the body. It helps newborns and premature babies to overcome their jaundice more quickly, and in serious cases to avoid risky blood transfusions, and we could not have purchased it without the help of the RBIF.”



ESTD 2007

WHISKY



NET



The SME Sponsorship Scheme has gone from strength to strength since it was launched a number of years ago, and we were delighted this year to be able to support a hospital in Fejér county for the first time.

Norhot Kft. is a real estate company based in Budapest, and the owners joined our scheme for the first time in 2020, identifying Fejér county as the region that they wished to support.

As is custom with our new donations we turned to the RBIF's medical adviser, Professor György Fekete, to help us in our search for a worthy beneficiary. We were put in contact with Dr Gábor Simon, who runs the paediatric department at the Szent György University Hospital in Székesfehérvár.

The doctors and nurses at the paediatric department revealed that volumetric pumps would be most useful for their daily work, and asked if we could help. Thanks to the generosity of Norhot Kft., and with the RBIF matching the donation, we were able to fund the purchase of two Alaris volumetric pumps and an infusion stand.

According to Dr Gábor Simon, "The Alaris volumetric pumps are extremely useful for the department. When treating children, especially those in critical conditions, it is crucial for fluid and volume replacement to be precise and aligned with body weight. Medicines administered in certain infusions can be dosed with precision thanks to the volumetric pumps."

The pumps offer a versatile and flexible platform for infusion therapy, which is suitable across a broad range of applications, and they have a range of features suited to drug therapy, blood transfusions and parenteral feeding, with a large, clear display and intuitive operation.

A big thank you to Norhot Kft. for their kind donation, and for agreeing to continue their involvement in 2021, so we can look forward to completing another project next year.



ÖREGTÖLGY FARMSTEAD – BACK TO NATURE ORGANIC FOOD AND FAMILY FARM HOLIDAYS



In 2020 the Robert Burns International Foundation continued its support of the Paediatric Department at the Csongrád-Csanád County Health Centre in Hódmezővásárhely purchasing equipment that ensures non-invasive respiratory support for babies and infants. This donation was part of our SME Sponsorship Scheme, and was enabled by the continued involvement of Inter Relocation Kft.

The nurses and doctors at the department frequently encounter babies suffering from respiratory problems like acute bronchiolitis, often as a result of a virus (respiratory syncytial virus). In some cases this leads to severe respiratory symptoms and the babies need admitted to hospital, and the situation can be compounded by other factors, such as premature birth, heart disorders or congenital disorders.

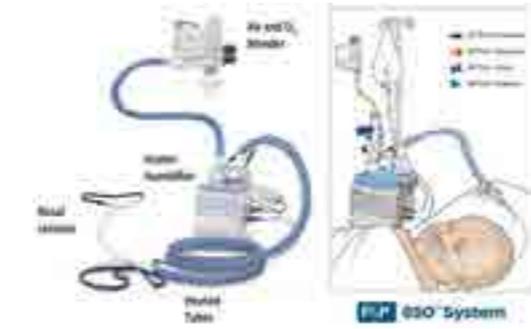
Most problems arise between the autumn and the spring, particularly in January and February. Using the respiratory system purchased using the support of the RBIF and Inter Relocation, the doctors and nurses can primarily help alleviate upper respiratory infections, thereby helping them get better as soon as possible.

“Until now we could only rely on traditional oxygen therapy as we did not have the necessary equipment to hand, which meant some of the babies had to be transferred to other hospitals for treatment. Thanks to the donation we can now treat these severe cases too using modern, non-invasive respiratory treatment.” - Dr Ferenc Papp, consultant physician and head of department.

This “high flow nasal cannula therapy” (HFNC) is a heated and humidified system that allows a prescribed fraction of inspired oxygen levels to be delivered at very high flow rates, helping babies and children to breathe and take in enough oxygen. It is a treatment used in the event of mild to moderate respiratory problems, mainly virus-induced respiratory inflammations.

The donated equipment was the Fisher&Paykel 850 Optiflow HFNC system, and it is better than traditional oxygen therapy for various reasons, among others, the required oxygen concentration can be administered more accurately and the high flow of gas cleans the pharynx, minimising the carbon dioxide inhaled back into the body, which raises the efficiency of the oxygen treatment. Compared to other respiratory therapies this is much more comfortable and easier to tolerate for the babies and children.

With the donated equipment the hospital can treat six severe cases at the same time, which comes as a huge help to the staff in Hódmezővásárhely, not to mention the little patients.



Inter Relocation
MOBILITY PROFESSIONALS

GROUP

The Gyöngyvirág Children's Home in Budapest's 18th District is home for up to 40 children between 3 and 18 years of age. Some are orphans, but the majority are children who have been taken into care by law. They are looked after by a team of dedicated care workers who provide physical and mental support for them day and night, working in shifts. The children attend local schools during term time.

The Home is part of the state-run network of the Social and Children's Protection Directorate and all staff salaries and operational costs are covered by the state. However, central budgets typically provide only the bare minimum. Further, having to submit requests via a central administration means procurement is typically a lengthy process, sometimes leaving the home with broken equipment for years.

RBIF teamed up with Budapest Airport, RBIF's Sponsor of the Year in 2019 and a long-time supporter of the Home, to fund the purchase of furniture and equipment in 2019 following a recent refurbishment of the home by the state.

In 2020, RBIF made a further donation to the Gyöngyvirág Home. The staff have used our donation to fund the purchase of fridges, dishwashers, vacuum cleaners and kitchen appliances – items which help make everyday life easier for staff and children in lots of ways. Our donation has also funded the strengthening of the WiFi signal throughout the home and the purchase a printer. Both proved invaluable to help support the children in their online digital home learning during the pandemic. Last but not least, our donation has funded purchases of televisions and a karaoke speaker. The speaker helps inject extra opportunities for fun into the various activities and entertainment organised within the home.



We have supported the paediatric unit at the Szent Rafael Hospital in Zalaegerszeg for a number of years now, in collaboration with FirstMed Centers, as part of our SME Sponsorship Scheme.

With the continued help of Dennis Diokno and his team, along with funds raised at the Burns Supper, were we able to purchase three different sizes of videolaryngoscope along with a monitor that has wifi capability. Videolaryngoscopy is a technique that utilises video camera technology to visualise airway structures and facilitate endotracheal intubation.

Particularly in the current situation this equipment is extremely important to the functioning of the department. Dr. László Gárdos, Chief Physician of the Paediatric Department at the Szent Rafael Hospital in Zalaegerszeg, said:

“When the Premature Baby Rescue and Paediatric IC Foundation was established we undertook to save the lives of premature babies, and to support, in any way possible, those children who are seriously ill and require intensive care. We have been doing so for 10 years, and over this time we have received the support of the Robert Burns International Foundation on several occasions, for which we are extremely grateful!”



To many of us who have lived in Budapest for a number of years, Paul Mizener needs no introduction. Formerly chef at Budapest's only Scottish bar The Caledonia shortly after he arrived in Hungary, Paul is now well established as a professional chef at Chefparade, Hungary's largest cooking school (and the culinary experts behind the RBIF's Summer BBQ!).

“Having lived in Hungary for 10 years, I wanted to give something back to the community, and after speaking with the RBIF and Chefparade, where I had worked for the past 8 years, we came up with the idea of a testimonial dinner”, says Paul, explaining where the idea for our joint project came from.

For health reasons, Paul's oldest daughter is a regular visitor to the Bethesda Hospital, which became the obvious choice for the fundraiser. After speaking with Dr Rita Jakus, head of the neurology department, and following confirmation from the RBIF's medical adviser Dr György Fekete, we knew what equipment we needed.

Bethesda Hospital needed help to buy equipment to improve the standard of neurodiagnostic care they could offer, and this fitted in perfectly with Paul's plan.

“Due to the amazing generosity of my colleagues at Chefparade, who volunteered their time to deliver the evening and the numerous suppliers who donated produce, wine, whisky and beer, the band who performed for free, fantastic speeches, laughter and tears of joy and all the wonderful guests, we managed to achieve our target.” – added Paul.

“With normal electroneurography tests we cannot see the nerves, so we can only infer from these results where the nerve damage is. This ultrasound equipment is a huge help in identifying the exact position and size of the damage, after broken bones, post-operative muscular problems, etc.” – revealed Dr Rita Jakus.

The sum of money raised by Paul and his Chefparade colleagues on the night of the dinner was matched by the Robert Burns International Foundation, so we were able to make a donation of over HUF 2.6 million to Bethesda Hospital for the equipment, an outstanding achievement!



For a number of years the RBIF has collaborated with the Nursery Project team, and 2020 was no different, with another ambitious upgrade project in the village of Istenmezeje, in Heves county.

A region badly hit by unemployment after the closure of coal mines, the long-standing effects are still visible. Local job opportunities are still limited, and people tend to travel to school and work to the nearby city of Eger.

The village community

Despite the difficulties, locals are a close, kind-hearted community. They not only welcomed the idea of improving their nursery facilities, but decided to play an active part. They organised a fundraising event to help change the flooring in the playroom, and welcomed a large number of volunteers from Budapest to the village, preparing local delicacies and drinks. On the delivery day itself they helped with the renovation by painting and assembling furniture. The local Mayor's Office and the nursery management were really helpful from the start, truly a community effort.

In partnership with the RBIF, the IHBC (Irish-Hungarian Business Circle), and the St Andrew's Association, HUF 3.6 million was raised. A team of interior design students surveyed the playroom and completed the interior design plans. Once the orders were completed and deliveries arranged to the nursery by volunteers, there was a very successful volunteering day with IHBC and the local Mayor's office to assemble all the furniture and fittings in one day.

The Robert Burns International Foundation has been a long-standing partner of The Nursery Project, who were very grateful for the HUF 1,200,000 in financial support the foundation allocated, which paid for the furniture, mattresses and educational toys.

“The happiest moment was when all the volunteers who came to the handover day saw for themselves the joy and smiles of the local children when they came to see their new nursery. It has made a huge impact on their daily life, giving them a new, high-quality place to learn and play, a well-equipped nursery that all the local staff could only dream about. Many tears were shared when it all became a reality” – said Zsuzsanna Bozó, the creative mind behind the Nursery Project.



The nursery is an important place for kids, but now also for the local community. People who once attended the nursery and helped during the planning and building process decided to continue their support by opening a voluntary savings account, which will be a source for buying new toys and gifts for the local kids in need every year. This is another great achievement of this project, not only improving the interior, but in this case, helping a community in many ways.

“We all know 2021 is going to be a difficult year. Fundraisers and large events have been cancelled, and this will have an effect on how The Nursery Project will be able to help. But we stay optimistic and hope life will be back to normal, and helping little ones and local communities will be even more welcomed and appreciated.”



Istenmezeje

For the second year running and in cooperation with our long-time sponsor Budapest Airport, the RBIF was able to support the Neonatal Department at the Bajcsy-Zsilinsky Hospital in Budapest's 10th district.

The department cares for approximately 200 babies each year, with between 15 and 20 babies on the ward at any one time. They are currently undergoing a renovation which will provide them with two wings within the department, one for natural births and the other for C-section births.

The RBIF was able to provide two pieces of equipment this year. The first item was a Bionet Patient Monitor. This device is versatile, compact, portable and lightweight, making it easy to move from room to room, and it provides advanced parameters and analysis for accurate patient care, which can be so important in those first few hours of a newborn's life.

The second item the hospital asked for was an incubator, but this time an open incubator. One advantage of this type of incubator, as opposed to a closed one, is that although it does not have the same level of control over humidity, it is easier to achieve that all important skin-to-skin contact as it is possible to touch the baby from above.

Senior neonatologist at the Bajcsy-Zsilinsky Hospital, Dr. Judit Jeager, revealed that:

“The open incubator, which is also a warming-resuscitation table, was used in our temporary operating theatre from the moment it arrived at the hospital. The new open incubator is used daily by babies born by c-section for whom it is so necessary to be placed in a warm environment. Currently, our temporary operating theatre is part of the hospital's operating theatre wing, where it is cooler than otherwise optimal for newborns due to the central air conditioning. Our new open incubator heats up perfectly to the desired temperature so that newborns do not cool down during care.”

According to Dr. Jeager, the renovation of the department has been underway since October, which means that neither the maternity ward, nor the operating theatre (dedicated for c-sections) are usable. Both are at temporary locations within the hospital, which is why it has been extremely important to be able to provide newborns with modern equipment.

When the reconstruction is complete, they will be able to use both devices in the renovated maternity ward and in the theatre.

“We thank the Foundation for its support in modernising the equipment of the Bajcsy-Zsilinsky Hospital's Neonatal Department.”



In many respects, 2020 is a year we shall all want to forget. And nothing demonstrates this more than the tragic news we heard at the start of the pandemic in Europe back in March of the untimely passing of our friend Steven Dick, Deputy Head of Mission at the British Embassy in Budapest. When Steven arrived in Hungary in November 2019 he kindly accepted our invitation to become part of the Robert Burns International Foundation by sitting on our Curatorium as a board member. In the few months that he fulfilled that role he did so with great energy and enthusiasm. In February, in his capacity as Deputy-Head of Mission here in Hungary and as a board member, Steven participated at a charity function down in Zalaegerszeg in support of the local hospital that the RBIF has supported for a number of years.

Clearly a busy individual, he didn't even have time to return to his flat following a trip back to the UK, and we picked him up at the airport at Saturday lunchtime before travelling straight down to the south-east of Hungary in time for the event, where he enthralled the nurses, doctors and guests with his friendly demeanour and his excellent grasp of Hungarian after such a short time. We came to know Steven as an honest, hard-working, committed and fun individual, always willing to help. He will be sorely missed.

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