

Headley Voluntary Care

Chernobyl Children's Life Line

Spring Meeting : Thursday 9 May 2013 : Headley Church Centre

We all remember the dreadful nuclear explosion and fallout which occurred in April 1986 in Chernobyl, Ukraine, a part of the Soviet Union . It was a long time ago, and for weeks we were inundated with reports of the damage caused, and especially the dreadful effects the fallout had on the inhabitants of Chernobyl itself.

You would be forgiven for thinking that it is all over now, that the after effects have gone, and all is well.

Appallingly, this is not the case. 70% of the radioactive fallout from the explosion fell on Belarus, and to this day thousands are born every year with birth defects and go on to develop thyroid cancer, bone cancer and leukaemia To see children with these defects is heart breaking, and virtually nothing is being done for them; Russia does not want to know, and the Ukrainian government turns a blind eye.

The Chernobyl Children's Life Line charity is Britain's attempt to offer some respite from the misery suffered by Chernobyl's damaged children. The charity brings these child victims for recuperative breaks...short holidays...in the UK, and nearly 50,000 have come to our country to stay with host families since the charity was started in 1992. The charity also provides multi-vitamins, basic health care products, and occasionally on special request, chemotherapy medicines.

On Thursday 9 May, Pauline Fitter BEM, who runs the Haslemere Link of the charity, is coming to talk to us about their work. We would like as many people as possible to come and hear what she has to say at the Headley Voluntary Care Spring meeting, and to support her in her work for these damaged children.

Until recently the children could come to the UK for their short holiday with free visas. But, with effect from 1 April this year the Government is to impose a charge of £86 per visa per child just to enter Britain. Currently 5000 children come to us for their holiday each year so the cost to the charity will be a disastrous £430,000! Here is what the Minister of Immigration had to say on the matter. 'The Chernobyl Children charities were informed in November 2010 that Ministers had decided that the gratis visa scheme would unfortunately end on 31 March 2013. I am afraid there has been no change to this decision'

Please show your support for Pauline and her team who against all odds are doing such a worthwhile job for these children, by coming to the

**Spring meeting of Headley Voluntary Care at the Church Centre in Headley at
8pm on Thursday 9 May**

We will have a collection plate available, and any contributions will be appreciated

**Peter Marsh
Headley Voluntary Care**