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Nick's Journey Begins!

Lord Rowlands CBE visited MTIB in April 06, to wish Nick Evans (ICT Officer) all the best for his trip to take part in voluntary work in Malaysia. Working as part of a team organised by his Pentecostal Church, Nick travelled to rural Malaysia to visit the Shecham orphanage, where he helped out by undertaking general DIY work at the home.



Lord Rowlands CBE with MTIB ICT Officer Nick Evans

From the fundraising efforts made before the trip, Nick was able to donate £200 to the orphanage which was used for new mosquito screens and new kitchen units.

During his stay, he also travelled for 17 hours in a 4x4 to stay with the indigenous minority people of Peninsular Malaysia (Orang Asli), where he distributed food and medicine to families living in the jungle.

Nick said that "it was a wonderful experience and I was touched with the welcome that we received on our travels". **MTIB would like to thank all of those who were kind enough to sponsor Nick's journey to Malaysia.**

Trevor Tatchell Golf Challenge 2006



The English Blind Association Golf Team



Scottish and Southern Energy Plc Golf Team

The 8th Annual MTIB Charity Golf event held at Morlais Castle Golf club, this year, yet again proved to be a winner. The Trevor Tatchell Golf Challenge was first introduced in 1999, when MTIB decided to organise a charity golf event to be held at Morlais Castle Golf Club on an annual basis.

The motivation and drive behind the tournament is to:

- raise awareness of the activities of MTIB
- to forge new partnerships with other organisations
- to raise money
- to provide an enjoyable day out for all participants

In total 31 teams entered the 2006 tournament with everyone completing the 18 hole course. With 19 sponsors and various donations made throughout the day, the golf day successfully raised £3,000, which will be used for a number of good causes at MTIB. Congratulations go to the winners of the 2006 Golf challenge; Scottish and Southern Energy Plc with their team of 4 players including **Alan Williams, Nathan Harris, John Devereux, and Kevin Greenhorn.** MTIB are thrilled that the 2006 Golf Challenge was a resounding success and would like to thank the senior officers and staff at Morlais Castle Golf Club, all participating teams, sponsors and individual donors who supported the event. **See you again next year!**

Welcome MTIB would like to welcome **Elite Supported Employment Agency Ltd**, who we partnership with, and who have recently joined us at our new headquarters.



charity no. 1007270 company number 2659355

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Merthyr Tydfil Institute for the Blind

NEWSLETTER

Autumn/Winter 2006

Supporting and developing disabled people through employment

MTIB opens its' doors to the future

A wonderful moment in the 83 year history of The Merthyr Tydfil Institute for the Blind (MTIB) occurred on Monday 25th September, with the official opening of the new headquarters at Triangle Business Park, Pentrebach, by Lord Rowlands CBE of Merthyr Tydfil and of Rhymney.



L-R: Lyndon Thomas Director MTIB John Stacey Chief Executive Officer MTIB Tom C. Lewis Vice Chairman MTIB Gary Meredith Chairman MTIB Lord Rowlands CBE of Merthyr Tydfil and of Rhymney Huw Lewis Assembly Member for Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney Richard Wellfoot Director of Finance MTIB Ralph Cooper Director MTIB Front Row: Maisey Davies Director MTIB



Due to the recent growth and expansion of the company, MTIB's move into the new factory will enable them to offer more services to people with disabilities looking for work. MTIB currently employ 64 members of staff at the new headquarters in

administration and manufacturing posts. In addition, the company also supports the employment of around 200 people with disabilities at mainstream employers throughout South Wales. MTIB's successful growth strategy is supported by their key aims of rehabilitating, training and developing all employees to help them reach their full potential, achieve personal goals and provide them with employment opportunities.

Invitations for the official opening were sent out to some 140 people, with over 100 guests attending the actual event including MTIB contacts, working partners, suppliers and clients from both the public

and private sector. Chief Executive John Stacey pointed out that "the percentage of people replying and wanting to attend has been very pleasing. In a way, it shows the kind of respect and esteem that our partners and supporters have for us".

At the official opening Lord Rowlands CBE toured the new factory, met with employees of MTIB and then unveiled the plaque to signify a new era in the charity's future. He said "these wonderful new premises represent the kind of true commitment that MTIB has made to the employment of people with disabilities, past, present and especially now for the future".



Lord Rowlands CBE has had a long association with the Institute. His late wife, Lady Rowlands was a director for many years at MTIB and was a key driver of this new project.



Unit 4, Triangle Business Park, Pentrebach, Merthyr Tydfil. CF48 4TQ. Tel: 01685 370072

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MTIB



The move to the new factory site in Pentrebach took place in April 2006 after years of planning and commitment to realise MTIB's blue print for the Future Project. Support from the Board of Directors, the Welsh Assembly Government, The Local Regeneration Fund team from Merthyr Council and the management team at MTIB enabled a smooth transition to take place.

The doors were finally closed at the old premises at Maesgwynne Industrial Estate on the 12th April 2006, leaving behind some fond memories. John Stacey, Chief Executive said "It's taken a while to settle into our new home at Pentrebach, but my heartfelt thanks

go to all our workers and my fellow managers who have made the move a fairly comfortable one. We look forward to caring for our customer's interests and our placement employees from these new premises."

At the new headquarters MTIB directors are continuing with their growth strategy to implement initiatives for new product developments in furniture frame making, board fabrication & garden furniture and new training initiatives for people with different disabilities.



Gary Williams (New Directions Recruitment Ltd) presenting the award to Petra Kennedy

Mid Glamorgan Education Business Partnership (EBP) Awards Dinner

On Thursday 29th June, MTIB scooped the EBP County award for Merthyr Tydfil, for their supporting role in schools, at the Mid Glamorgan Education Business Partnership Awards Dinner. The prestigious annual event was held at the Miskin Manor Country Hotel in Pontyclun and was attended by the Senior WORKSTEP officer, Petra Kennedy, who had the honour of collecting the award on behalf of MTIB.

The achievement was awarded as an acknowledgement of the WORKSTEP team's hard work over the last year. This included attending schools in Merthyr Tydfil and Caerphilly and giving presentations to staff and students about MTIB. The WORKSTEP team work closely with schools and businesses to

raise awareness of MTIB, its activities and aims for supporting people with disabilities. The information provided to the schools involved was further used by the students as part of a project where they demonstrated their understanding of MTIB by carrying out presentations to pupils in other classes within the school.

Overall, the awards night went well with a number of key representatives from business and education present at the event, including Jane Davidson, Minister for Education & Lifelong Learning, who presented some of the awards.

Insight into WORKSTEP

The aim of WORKSTEP is to provide support in jobs for people with disabilities who have more complex barriers to finding and keeping work but who, with the right support, are able to make a valuable contribution in their job and where appropriate develop and progress to mainstream employment.

At the core of WORKSTEP is the need to focus support clearly on the individual.

- Develop and improve job skills and employability, including the ability to work with others and sustain a job.
- Meet the requirements of disabled people facing the most significant barriers to working, who need continuing support over a period of time.
- Encourage personal development and promote independence for disabled people.
- Encourage employers to participate in the development and support of their employees.
- Enable individuals to work effectively in a job, focusing on their own and their employer's requirements in a planned and structured way.



MTIB Workstep Team

MTIB and WORKSTEP provide a wide range of supported work opportunities that meet the differing needs of people with disabilities and reflect the demand of the local labour market.

MTIB and WORKSTEP offer a range of support to both employers and employees including practical help such as on the job training or job coaching, mentoring from colleagues, helpful advice and awareness.

WORKSTEP Case Study: Anne Williams



For the past 20 years, Anne Williams

has suffered from depression and frequent panic attacks and as a result, she was unable to use public transport on her own. She has found her health condition to be very restrictive, as it affects her ability to interact with others and therefore limits the opportunities of finding suitable employment.

She had previously worked in a coffee shop within walking distance of her home for 4 years, but was then made redundant in October 2005. After becoming unemployed Anne's condition continued to deteriorate, until she was encouraged to take part

on a WORKPREP trial, carrying out administration work for Brynelan Management Services during March 2006. Her placement proved to be very successful and Anne decided that she would like to try to return to employment, however she was aware that she would need some extra support.

Through the WORKSTEP scheme, MTIB provided support and guidance for Anne to help her gain sustainable employment. She has now been employed for 6 months and has excelled in her training and development completing NVQ level 2 in Communication and Numeracy and is now working towards NVQ level 3 in Business Admin. Anne has even started travelling to Cardiff on the train on her own and feels that her job has greatly increased her confidence. The support she received from WORKSTEP has been invaluable in helping her to reach these goals.



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