

## **Knitted teddies bringing comfort and hope to children around the world.**

**By Gill Sayers.**

The first Teddies went out to the Sudan in 1986 sent by WRVS workers to where the Emergency Care for Children (ECC) nurses were setting up a temporary orphanage in a refugee camp for 2,000 children with TB. The Teddies were such a success that more were requested. Someone then sent out some shoe bags and these were a roaring success as the children had something to keep their one and only treasure in (this being the only thing they had ever owned). One doctor said that the Teddies did more good than medicine; cheer the children up, give them hope and you are on the road to putting them right physically!

Teddies to Peru were delivered from the backs of mules by the ECC team who were working with abandoned handicapped children and desperately poor people in remote mountainous regions. A local factory gave coloured tissue paper so that the children received a wrapped Christmas present.

Another consignment of Teddies to Uganda was sorely needed by orphanages to "help make children back into children". Although Uganda is now experiencing comparative peace after war, children were still being found with guns in their hands and many having lost both parents wandering about in great need.

The Bishop of Taunton took Teddies out when he visited mission hospitals in Zambia. After the hurricane in Jamaica, Teddies were flown out for injured children who had lost everything. And more recently, 1,500 were sent out to Armenia after the terrible earthquake.

In one Romanian orphanage things are better this year. Instead of shaven heads, the children's hair has been allowed to grow. They can have their Teddy at night to cuddle, but the Teddies are locked away by day as personal property is still unfamiliar and not knowing how to play, the Teddies would be destroyed by bedtime. The bags are important, equated by one Romanian child to the cot he lived in so long: it is the Teddy's security. Gradually these children learn how to play. But first the Teddy is a companion, some children sling the bag over their shoulder with the Teddy's head peeping out.

More Teddies have gone out to Calcutta, Thailand, Sudan, different parts of Romania, Croatian villages, Albanian hospitals and an ear clinic in Nepal. It is incredible how numbers of Teddies have arrived according to need. Sadly the need is always going to be there. All too often there are civil wars, famines or natural disasters.

Could you help by knitting a Teddy, making a Teddy bag or even donating some oddments of wool or material? Help to bring a little joy into the life of a needy child.

If you would like to knit a Teddy, here are some points to consider:

1. Please adhere to the pattern as we do like all the Teddies to be the same to avoid any jealousy i.e. no added hat, skirts, bags etc.

2. When putting the wool around the neck, please thread it through the knitting, starting from centre back.  
Knot the two ends together and sew scarf at the back, over the knot so it does not get separated from the Teddy. Do not wind surplus wool round the neck as a child could put their fingers underneath it and break it and perhaps pull the wool out and chew it.
3. Leave the scarf free at the front so the child can tie and untie it. Do not use ribbon round the neck.
4. Please embroider mouth in stem stitch or back stitch so again, the child cannot pull it out. Do not use French knots for eyes.
5. Stuff fairly firmly. If there is not enough stuffing put in, with the amount of play that the Teddy gets, the stuffing could be shaken down to one end.
6. Bags approximately 10" by 13". Do not use elastic for drawstring. If wool is used, please twist strands together to make it stronger.
7. Please leave Teddies separate from bags when delivering them to Audrey.



Motto:

**Made with Love**

**Sent with Love**

**To be Loved**

Doctors who treat children in third world or war torn countries have found that children who have their own Teddies to cuddle in their cots get better quicker than those who don't have one. Each child keeps his own Teddy and can take it home.

Full instructions are given below. They are very simple and quick to make. If you can make a little bag for your Teddy (details below), that would be most welcome but if not, it doesn't matter.

## Teddies' Knitting Instructions

Double knitting wool. Size 10 needles

Main colour—for head and paws. Trouser colour. Jumper colour. Scarf colour

Cast on 10 stitches main colour. Knit 10 rows. Change to trouser colour and knit 30 rows. Make another leg in the same way

Knit across all 20 stitches and work 18 rows. Change to jumper colour and knit 24 rows. Change to main colour for head **and also change to stocking stitch.**

Work for 5½" and change to jumper colour. Continue remainder of Teddy in reverse order.

Stitch down the sides of the head. With Jumper colour, pick up 8 stitches either side of neck join (16 stitches in all) and knit 20 rows. Change to main colour and knit 10 rows for paws.

Sew up Teddy, leaving opening in crotch. Sew diagonal top corners for ears before stuffing. Please stuff Teddy with only polyester or other healthy padding. **Foam rubber is not recommended as babies may chew it.** Then run a thread through the knitting around the neck to draw it in.

Sew a **happy** face on Teddy. For mouth, please use either stem stitch or back stitch.

Scarf— Cast on 75 stitches. Knit 4 rows and cast off. Tie scarf on Teddy and sew firmly to back of neck. **Do not sew down at front.**

**Please do not deviate from the pattern as we like all Teddies to look the same.**

If you have any queries, please contact Mrs Audrey Pegrum, St. Nicholas, Glebe Road, Ramsden Bellhouse, Billericay, Essex. CM11 1RJ—01268 710757 and [audrey.pegrum@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:audrey.pegrum@tiscali.co.uk)

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Dear Lord,

We ask your blessing on this project. We ask that these Teddies will be a symbol of the love of Jesus for all children, that they will bring comfort and joy to sick and deprived children in many parts of the world and that they will show them that we are thinking of them and praying that they may soon be restored to full health.

We ask, Lord, that they may soon reach the areas where they are most needed. We ask this for the sake of your dear Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

This is a prayer that Audrey's friend, Eric Johnson composed for her before he died.

## To Audrey and Her Helpers

To knit a bear with a smiling face,  
That comforts a child in a far flung place,  
Is a caring thing that is worthy of note,  
And for these troubled times a real antidote.  
To these awful problems that beset a child,  
In the madness of a world by war defiled,  
In their world of unending woe,  
Where every new face is a probable foe,  
That little bear could be the friend  
That becomes the light at the tunnel's end.  
So as you knit that cheerful little bear,  
You are showing that someone out there,  
Is a thoughtful, caring friend,  
Who wants to see a sadness end.

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### **Teddies for Tragedies Newsletter (Excerpt)**

A further 8,000 Teddies have been distributed making a grand total, since September 1995, of 240,000 going to 46 different countries. We also gave out £3,350 to the various charities we support.

I held a 'Garden Party' in June at my home in aid of Love Light Romania, the Home, which I visited, for children who are HIV positive. The day was bright and sunny and some 115 people attended. The magnificent total of £1,060 resulted.

We have continued to support Christian Hope International giving them lots of the lovely blankets, jumpers, cardigans etc. and Teddies that you knit which they took to the Sudan and India. It has been wonderful that they have been able to open new homes in India and installed eleven new wells in small communities and it has been great that we have been able to help them financially with their various projects. We are still sponsoring some 20 children in Rwanda, Mozambique, Uganda and Burundi through the scheme I started whereby 10 people sponsor one child. The cost for each child is £180 per annum, so under my scheme each sponsor pays £18 per annum. If anyone is interested to help in this respect please contact me. Private addresses will never be disclosed. Recently a few of our children have reached the time when they have to leave full time education. Many return home to their villages and through their education are able to help other children who haven't the chance to go to school. We, unfortunately, are not able to keep in contact with them once they've left school, but please rest in the knowledge that through your generosity all these children have been given a chance in life. I am pleased to say that new children have replaced those who have left.

We are so grateful that boxes of toiletries, bibles, bible reading notes, stationery and Teddies are still being delivered to Br. Titus in Zambia through the help of Medical Missionary News. Also with their help we have been able to send out sewing machines, sewing aids and bicycles. Many of your lovely knitted blankets and garments given to MMN are sent to Zambia too. Again we have been able to help them financially which helps to defray the cost of transport.

Charles Storer of Hope & Aid Direct is still carrying out two convoys per annum to Kosovo. The report following the October 2007 convoy was very positive. The people just loved the colourful knitted jumpers, cardigans, hats and blankets and the children were so full of joy when they received their Teddy. Charles told me that the situation out there is extremely poor. There is high unemployment, wages are very low and there is not enough money to buy much food. Instead of collecting food for this convoy I was able to give him £250 to buy food out there. This helps their economy and left more room on the vehicles for the large amount of blankets etc. we had collected and the 1,200 Teddies he had ordered. In March another convoy left. Again we were able to help them financially and give them a huge amount of blankets, knitted garments, 1,500 Teddies and 390 500gr. margarine boxes filled with toiletries. A similar amount also went out in October, so again a big thank you to Dorothy who fills them. You are a star! To my local supporters please please save me your 500 gr. margarine boxes. We just can't get enough, and if you could pick up a pack of economy soap in your supermarkets we would be delighted! The next convoy will be leaving in October. By the way, Charles also took some fur coats that had been donated to me, so if you have any to turn out I have a place for them. It is very cold in Kosovo in the winter.

Audrey Pegrum

If you would like to read the complete newsletter, including Audrey's description of receiving her MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List in June 2007, please see **Ros Pack**.