



**QEF**  
queen elizabeth's  
foundation for  
disabled people

# QEF Happening

Autumn 2011

Newsletter for Queen Elizabeth's Foundation for Disabled People

“What have I done to deserve this?”



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With a year to go to the 2012 Paralympics it was not surprising that the word 'disabled' appeared and will appear countless times across all the media, describing athletes of widely varied capabilities.

# Can we do without disability?

Most people use the word without much thought. However it was a surprise to hear that the president of the International Paralympic Committee, Sir Philip Craven, refuses to use the word.

Sir Philip, a former wheelchair basketball player, explained in a BBC interview. "If a machine gets disabled, it doesn't work. And that is the way that the word has influenced people's minds in the past.

"If you are going to talk about the positivity of human kind, why kick off with negativity?"

"There's an incredible difference between a wheelchair user and someone who's blind, you know."

The six disability categories within the Paralympic disciplines go a long way to define some significant differences.

While Sir Philip has a serious and heartfelt point to make, others see 'disabled' as a word that unifies the community and "changing the word does not actually fix anything" says disability campaigner Clair Lewis.

Here at QEF we have no difficulty saying that we support disabled people but we do recognise that the range of disability is very wide. For many it is not a comfortable word. When looking for employment it can become a label and those recovering from an accident will often prefer to consider themselves injured rather than disabled. People with non-visible disabilities face a great deal of scepticism from the general public.

The word is unlikely to go away but perhaps the Paralympics may play a more valuable role in educating the

public about the differences. How much better might it be for commentators to explain an athlete's disability as we watch them compete on a world stage, particularly when the disability is more complicated than a visible disability? The nature of conditions such as Multiple Sclerosis, Muscular Dystrophy or Cerebral Palsy, for example, can be made clear and while we celebrate the achievements of those competing we can acknowledge and come to a better understanding of what it means to live with these conditions.

Staff and volunteers here at QEF have always focused on people's abilities rather than their disabilities. The opportunity to achieve personal goals is surely everyone's right. That is why we are so proud of stories of people like Nicki, Stephen, Emily and the two Matthews. It is why I enjoy working at QEF and why I am so passionate about achieving positive change in the lives of disabled and disadvantaged people.

Perhaps it is worth leaving you with the words of Maria Miller, minister for disabled people, who said, "The Games offer a great opportunity to challenge outdated perceptions and help make further progress towards equality for disabled people in the UK." QEF works continuously towards this same goal and you can read here how we are meeting the challenge.

Thank you for your support from all at QEF.



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**QEF works with people living with physical and learning disabilities or acquired brain injuries to support them to achieve their goals for life.**

Registered Charity No 251051

# Back from the Brink

Even though Nicki is currently receiving treatment and rehabilitation at QEF, she has launched a £10,000 appeal.

Just a few weeks prior to publishing this newsletter an appeal was launched on behalf of QEF by Nicki Freeman. Nicki had completed a fun run in St Albans and raised £2,000 for QEF. But she wanted to do more and set her sights on raising a further £10,000 to fund new equipment and services by writing to QEF supporters and telling them her story.

Nicki can't remember the car crash, just over a year ago, aged 18, when she broke a lot of bones and was left in a coma. Her family prepared for the worst but thankfully the worst never happened. Nicki said, "It took me a long time to get better. At first I couldn't walk or even do the simplest things. But I did get better and a few months ago I did a fun run to raise money for QEF, which is doing so much to help me get better. Well, when I say a fun run, for me it was a fun slow walk. But I did it!"

Nicki's story is heart-wrenching yet typical of those who come to use QEF Neuro-rehabilitation Services at the Brain Injury Centre in Banstead. The Centre is the only unit in the country which works exclusively with young people with acquired brain injuries, helping them to re build their lives and gain new skills.



Intensive specialist treatment is personalised to individual needs. After an initial assessment an action plan is negotiated. The plan, carried out by interdisciplinary care and therapy teams, is regularly evaluated and revised to ensure that progress is in the right direction.

Amongst her therapies, Nicki is even learning to play the guitar, sing and write songs. But Nicki admits that she faces some tough challenges, "My physiotherapist really pushes me hard to do things but I know it's helping me.

My brain can't send signals to my body very well. If you were sitting down and decided to get up you would just do it wouldn't you? You wouldn't even think about how to move your body to do it. But with me it's different. I have to think very hard, 'which bit must I move first?'"

Nicki's father, Peter, said, "Since her accident we have been helped by so many friends and strangers in Nicola's journey back from the brink. It will be a very long and hard journey for Nicola and us, but the support of people like you and the team at the Brain Injury Centre mean that we have a future to look forward to with her. It isn't the one we expected, but the progress she has made at QEF gives us hope for further progress.



"We have just come back from a weekend with Nicola at the Reading Festival; something she had gone to in previous years. Attending Reading Festival with Mum and Dad isn't something any 19 year old would have normally planned, but she had a great time. Nicola has started work experience at a city farm, and this, added to her spells of volunteering in a charity shop, are all significant moves towards more independence. These things can only happen thanks to the support of the staff at QEF in preparing her for and supporting her at these experiences."

**You can still make a donation to Nicki's Appeal using the response form on page 10 of this newsletter or visiting [www.qef.org.uk/nickifreeman](http://www.qef.org.uk/nickifreeman)**



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# Driving Determination

Stephen Wagland dropped in to Leatherhead Court to show off his new adapted Ford Kia Sedona. He was en route to take his mum and dad to a country pub for lunch.

Stephen was born with Pseudoachondroplasia, a rare medical condition characterised by short limbs and stature and extreme pain in the hips and the knees. Difficulty with walking and premature osteoarthritis further impeded his mobility. His progress in learning to drive is featured in a short QEF film, *Without You...*, where he looks forward to being fully independent when he would no longer need to rely upon his parents to ferry him about.

With support from QEF Mobility Services, Stephen passed his driving test in January 2009 and then his Pass Plus in November 2009 at the Centre.

Following a suggestion from a hospital occupational therapist Stephen initially came to QEF Mobility Services for advice and to be assessed for a vehicle adaptation to carry his

electric wheelchair. This led to assessments to enable Stephen to be transported more conveniently using a vehicle hoist in an estate car. While attending the assessments Stephen realised that driving himself was a real option and when he was sixteen applied for a provisional licence and took up lessons.

"A wheelchair has been my only means of getting around since I was at secondary school and I have always valued my independence. I remember coming with my father to QEF's Mobility Centre for advice on how to get me and my wheelchair in and out of the car and then I came back to learn to drive for myself." said Stephen. Passing the driving test opened the way for Stephen to consider the final hurdle to his independence and take charge of his active life.



Stephen with QEF President Corinna, Lady Hamilton of Dalzell DL

Horse-riding was an important part of Stephen's therapies and became a passion. Riding improved his back and enabled him to avoid surgery but sadly a change in horses meant that potential Paralympic 2012 ambitions had to be shelved. Nevertheless he now rides without adaptations to the reins and successfully competes against able-bodied riders; winning the Veteran Cup dressage



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competition in Great Bookham in 2010 and 2011 and a placing in the Sunshine Tour Final. Stephen trains two or three times a week and the physiotherapy it provides remains vitally important along with swimming sessions.

In addition to riding and swimming Stephen is in his last year at Nescot where he is completing an HND in Computing. Next on the list is finding a job.

Stephen's determination to be independent has been celebrated with a Medallion Award in 2010 from The Girdlers' Society in the City of London. The Girdlers' Medallions have been awarded for the last 15 years to reward and encourage physical, moral and academic endeavour amongst mostly young people.

In the same year Stephen was also the recipient of the inaugural James Hamilton Award, dedicated by QEF President Corinna, Lady Hamilton of Dalzell DL, to her late husband, Lord James Hamilton of Dalzell, former QEF Chairman and involved in the charity for over 30 years. This Award included a cash gift, which Stephen, with some foresight, has invested in two suits so that he is ready for interviews and the world of work.

Stephen acknowledges, with some humour, that "QEF did 90% of the leg work" to enable his new found independence, but his own confidence and determination are very evident.

# Making a Great Impression

Holding your own art exhibition when you have Tourette's Syndrome is a remarkable achievement for one QEF resident.

Matt, now 23 years old, came to QEF Independent Living Services in 2011, following a placement at the national College for Young People with Epilepsy, in order to gain a greater level of independence. Since he was 6 he has had Tourette's Syndrome which manifests itself in sudden and sometimes violent movements (tics) or shouting. Matt's tics were severe enough to cause spinal damage so he underwent a Deep Brain Stimulation operation in 2009 at the National Hospital in London which successfully reduced the number and severity of tics.

Creativity is Matt's way of coping. "It calms me down and helps my Tourette's. Life without my art wouldn't be interesting.

"It would be harder to live with the Tourette's as well because I have fewer tics when I paint." However his impressionist style lends itself well to the jerky movements associated with Tourette's.

When Matt is at work his surroundings are often covered in as much paint as the canvas. There are also occasional tears in the canvas but Matt is philosophical about it. "The lines are sometimes jerky when I get tics and paint goes flying or sometimes I end up stabbing holes in the canvas but I still use it as part of the pieces so it's me expressing myself."

As an aspiring artist Matt is keen to develop his art business and naturally dedicates much of his time to painting original pieces and reproducing his work as prints, note cards and other merchandise.

The full range of Matt's work is extremely impressive, demonstrating a keen eye for colour and shape. A large selection of work was exhibited



at QEF Independent Living Services Dorincourt Centre earlier this year to much acclaim and plans are afoot for an auction of his work.

To find out more about Matt and his art visit [www.mattsharpart.com](http://www.mattsharpart.com)

**QEF is interested in staging an art exhibition in 2011 so if you would like to help, please contact Annalisa Slater on 01372 841130 or [annalisa.slater@qef.org.uk](mailto:annalisa.slater@qef.org.uk)**



With the Ladies Autumn Lunch 2011 imminent, Committee Chairman, Sue Jacobs, shares some thoughts on why the lunches are such a sell-out success.

# Packed Lunches

Sue had been asked to join the Committee by a friend after attending a lunch. "As a mother and grandmother I felt strongly about QEF. Everyone is vulnerable. In a brief moment an illness or accident can completely change a person's life. It is particularly heartbreaking when it is a young person. Meeting them makes you want to help them in any way you can."

The Ladies Lunches take place in Spring and Autumn and each has its own organising committee and beneficiary QEF service. The Spring Lunches support QEF Independent Living Services while the Autumn Lunches support QEF Neuro-rehabilitation Services Brain Injury Centre.



Eve Pollard with Sue Jacobs

The Ladies Lunches date back to around 1990 when the first Autumn Lunches had been more the meeting of a circle of friends. By 2000 they were so successful that a Spring Lunch was launched for those who were unable to get a ticket for Autumn, and they have grown together ever since. The format is simple; an interesting guest speaker, an excellent lunch and some great shopping in



support of QEF. Although there are obvious similarities the nature of each event has synergy with the season, particularly with the stalls. Naturally the Autumn Lunch is a fantastic opportunity for Christmas shopping; a chance to find unique quality gifts and presents.

Over the years the quality of speakers has been great. Last year Eve Pollard was hugely entertaining but amongst the roll-call of guests such as Anne Widdecombe, Carol Thatcher, Eamonn Holmes and Mary Berry the mention of Alan Titchmarsh lights up Sue's eyes. "He was very personable and around 400 eager fans believed they knew him personally" she fondly remembered. "All the guests have been very generous with their time." BBC Breakfast presenter Bill Turnbull is the guest who will face a packed house this year.

Peter Freeman, whose daughter Nicki was involved in a serious road traffic



accident last year that left her in a coma fighting for her life, has also been invited to speak briefly about the work of QEF Neuro-rehabilitation Services. Following medical treatment for her injuries and rehabilitation therapies at QEF Brain Injury Centre, Nicki has just completed a fun run in St Albans, or "fun slow walk," as she

**"Over the last 5 years £165,000 has been raised for QEF and its work by these lunches." John Chamberlain, Director of Fundraising and Marketing**

describes it, and is continuing to improve. Acquired brain injury through trauma or illness is life changing and can strike anyone at anytime. Peter's view as a parent is very moving and a great tribute to Nicki's determination and the quality of QEF support.

Behind the scenes Sue's nine-strong committee has prepared another sell-out lunch. The Committee meets three or four times a year, contributing ideas and encouraging people to attend. New faces are always very welcome" says Sue.

## Ladies Autumn Lunch Committee

Sue Jacobs (Chairman)

Frances Clarke Sally Frost

Sue Harman Maggie Hallatt

Val McKenna Thelma Oakes

Yvonne Shaw Julie Smith

**Details of the Ladies Lunches are posted on the QEF website [www.qef.org.uk](http://www.qef.org.uk). For further information contact Pat Lelliott on 01372 841213 or [pat.elliott@qef.org.uk](mailto:pat.elliott@qef.org.uk)**

# “What have I done to deserve this?”

Visit the QEF website donate page and you can watch a video featuring Emily taken from a short film called *Without you...*, which features four people whose lives have been transformed through using QEF services.

The film has been shown on many occasions to many different audiences and the effect on viewers is often very emotional, particularly when Emily poignantly asks the question, “What have I done to deserve this?” Aged 17 I had achieved 13 GCSEs, was studying for A levels and hopeful of a University place. I woke up one morning unable to see, by the afternoon I was on a life support machine. Encephalitis and meningitis caused a severe brain injury that left me unable to speak or walk and completely dependent upon carers.”

Emily was in a coma for 8 weeks, followed by 7 months in hospital. However the film ends with her full of determination leaving QEF having regained some speech and

independence of movement and developed some strategies to compensate for other limitations. Emily had resumed her education at the Brain Injury Centre and gained a Geography A level which enabled her to attend Chichester College. “I have my life on track again,” she said.

With such an expressive telling of her story on film, viewers often ask the question, “How is she now?” Opportunely it was Emily who recently caught up with QEF. She had returned for a course of weekly physiotherapy sessions funded by The Meningitis Trust, preferring the familiarity of the Brain Injury Centre to the NHS as she knew the therapists and enjoyed the “community” atmosphere.

Although her speech is still measured and slow and she requires a wheelchair for full mobility her dream of going to University is becoming a reality, albeit three years later than planned. Emily has a place at Birmingham where she will be studying Business Management and will shortly move into student digs.

Her confidence is infectious. “I can’t see why I can’t do anything” she said. But that doesn’t mean that it is easy; getting on and off a horse, for example. Hearing what Emily has accomplished in these last two years is inspiring. She enjoyed a month long trip across Borneo by bus, boat and plane with 22 other disabled or disadvantaged young people, sleeping in tents, enjoying the Monsoon and white water rafting. Closer to home she has been skiing at the Milton Keynes Snowdome and regularly goes swimming.



It isn’t all play. Emily has also gained her HND in Business with Tourism “and was awarded Student of the Year” she added with a smile of evident pride.

Underneath the confidence Emily admits that there are days when she can’t cope. The realisation that a condition may be long term can dawn very slowly when a brain injury is involved. It is not like losing a limb that you know will never come back.

**“Imagine waking up one morning unable to see and by the afternoon being on a life support machine”.**

So what does the long-term hold for Emily? Besides the prospect of a degree there will be the need to find a job. In the meantime she has plans on getting an assistance dog next summer and getting back to driving (after a seizure last July ruled it out for a year). Naturally everyone at QEF is proud of Emily’s progress, wish her success in all her endeavours and look forward to hearing from her again.



# In the Pipeline

Working on an oil rig in the Caspian Sea off the coast of Azerbaijan sounds a far cry from QEF Vocational Services in leafy Leatherhead but former trainee Matthew Peggs has made the connection.

Now 40 years old, Matthew was born with Spina Bifida which impairs his mobility. Typically he will get around on crutches but also uses a wheelchair on occasions. Whether it is his developing confidence, getting older or a change in public attitude, he feels that disability is more accepted in society than 30 years ago. Ignorance was rife then and being different meant being ridiculed. He considers himself "physically challenged" rather than disabled. "Disability suggests that you can't do things. I can do anything anyone else can do, perhaps not as well or maybe slower," he explained.

Matthew completed a Computer Aided Design (CAD) course at QEF in 2009 and was found a work placement at the Leatherhead offices of global engineering, construction and services company KBR. But KBR was not the first big organisation that Matthew had worked for. Twenty

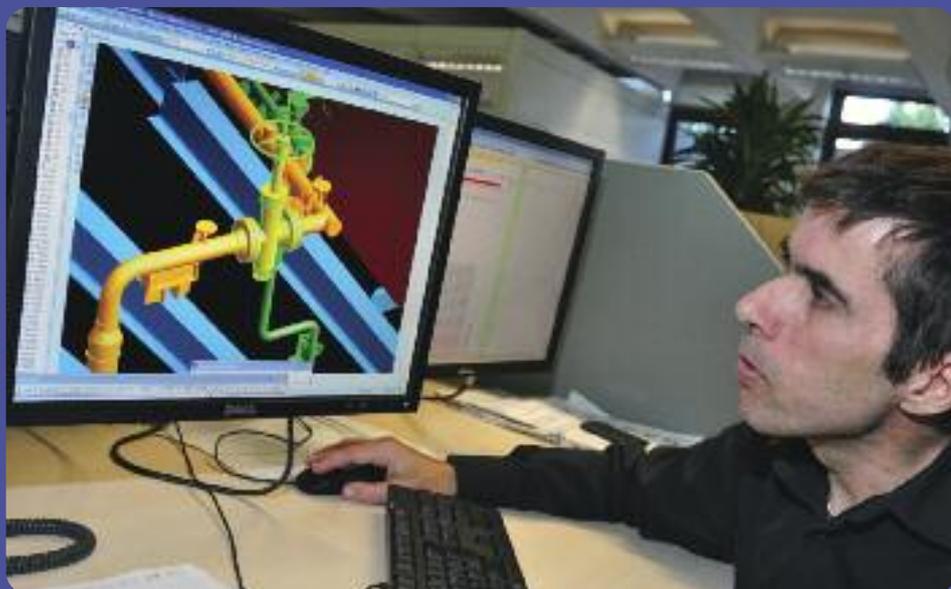
years ago he had taken a Bookkeeping and Computerised Accounts course at QEF and secured a place at the BBC R&D Department in Sutton. Sadly the job was made redundant in 1998 but Matthew continued in a variety of temporary positions as IT support until he secured full time work with Finsbury Orthopaedics. When this job was also made redundant Matthew came full circle back to QEF to re-train.

Attending one of QEF Vocational Services popular Open Days changed Matthew's life. Although he intended to sign up for an IT Support course, he was drawn to the CAD course. It was a desk based occupation and he was familiar with CAD as his father was an engineer. "I fancied something different and QEF gave me the opportunity to go in a different direction. Now I can see it was the right thing to have done," said Matthew.



At KBR Matthew started as an associate design technician working with the PDMS CAD system and quickly made a name for himself. His manager Richard Mlinaric, CTE – Leatherhead Piping at KBR, was full of praise, "Matthew's enthusiasm to become an effective member of the Piping discipline has proved to be infectious on those he works with. Currently part of the BP COP team, his technical understanding is developing well and he represents an excellent role-model to others." So much of an impression did Matthew make that KBR arranged with their software supplier AVEVA to provide QEF with their software and licenses. A promotion to design technician in August was a clear indication of Matthew's progress.

Although Matthew won't be physically working on that oil rig in the Caspian Sea, he will be contributing to its piping design as part of the project team. He speaks with some pride about the opportunity that KBR has laid before him, "You can actually show what you can do and people appreciate you for it." He is awaiting some decisions on the future direction of KBR's Apprenticeship Scheme and his next goal is an HNC in Mechanical Engineering. There is more studying and hard work ahead but as he says he is aware of the challenge, "You have to take the opportunity" he said.



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# Where Charity Begins

QEF's growing chain of shops is helping to raise vital funds for disabled people.

Gary Thomas, Head of QEF Retail Trading, is a man on a mission to transform more of the high streets of towns across the south east. Currently there are 12 shops but we know that if we can find more locations in the right places we can secure more funds for QEF.

All the shops are under the management of QEF Retail Trading, which also provides a fulfilment service for a number of other charities in addition to QEF: sending out mail orders and Christmas cards. Each shop has a full time manager and is staffed by volunteers. A host of some 250 volunteers sort, prepare and display the stock, work hard to keep the shops looking tidy and welcoming for the hundreds of customers who visit each week and naturally encourage them to buy.



asked to clear some items from a house in Knightsbridge. The owner had died and his family was returning to the Middle East. They were very happy to donate a number of carpets and paintings and it was thought best to send these items to a special auction. All items were sold substantially above their pre-sales

successfully and is a source of substantial additional funding.

So charity can begin at home. Take a look around in those spare rooms and cupboards where you have stored a host of useful but unused items and bring them along to your local shop or any of the QEF centres. If you do not have a shop nearby please call 01372 843616 for advice on how you can donate.



For the shops to deliver value they require a constant flow of donations. The demand is relentless. Good quality items are sorted, steamed and priced before being put out on the shop floor. Very little goes to waste as some items, such as rags, shoes, handbags and books, if not sold or sellable, can be traded on for recycling. Selected CDs and DVDs can also be traded.

With some of the shops selling furniture there is the occasional house clearance to be made. Recently and completely out of the blue, QEF was

estimates with one carpet selling for £8,000 and a silk painting for £3,200. The total amount was an incredible £23,000: a wonderful sum raised for QEF.

Just over a year ago the Gift Aid scheme was introduced into the QEF shops and this is proving very beneficial. Customers who are UK tax payers can increase the value of their purchases by 25p for every £1 spent. The scheme, employed by many charities, has now been adopted

## Shop Locations:

Ashted	Caterham
Cheam	Chessington
Chessington (Childrens)	East Horsley
East Molesey	Epsom
Leatherhead	Shepperton
Stonleigh	Tolworth

You can also shop online at [www.qef.org.uk/retail](http://www.qef.org.uk/retail)



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# Forthcoming Events

## Ladies Autumn Lunch

Duchess's Stand,  
Epsom Racecourse

Thursday 13 October 2011

Guest speaker: BBC Breakfast TV presenter Bill Turnbull. Lunch now sold out but stalls will be open to the general public from 1pm till 4pm. Suggested donation of £2 for entry.

For further details contact:  
Pat Lelliott,  
pat.elliott@qef.org.uk  
01372 841213

## The Annual Guinness and Oyster Luncheon

Mansion House, London, EC4

Thursday 24 November 2011

Our famous luncheon, now in its 46th year. Sponsored by Diageo and co-sponsored by Oracle.

For further details contact:  
Pat Lelliott,  
pat.elliott@qef.org.uk  
01372 841213

## Virgin London Marathon 2012

London

Sunday 22 April 2012

Apply for one of QEF's Golden Bond places with guaranteed entry to the Virgin London Marathon 2012, or support QEF with your own Ballot place.

For further details contact:  
Annie Slater,  
annalisa.slater@qef.org.uk  
01372 841130

# Christmas Carol Service

Guildford Cathedral

Wednesday 21 December 2011 at 7pm

Featuring

Penelope Keith, June Whitfield, Nicholas Owen and Arlene Rolph

8pm Mulled wine and mince pies in the Refectory (donation)

This event is free but to reserve your place please contact Pat Lelliott on 01372 841213 or pat.elliott@qef.org.uk



# QEF

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# Christmas cards

# £2.50

for pack of 10



1. Castle Combe  
WBW 21.6cm x 11.7cm



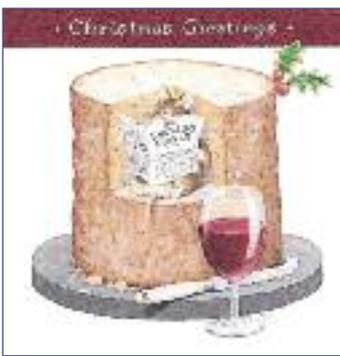
2. Christmas Cat  
SG 12cm x 17cm



3. Church Choir  
WBW 12cm x 17cm



4. Decorating the Tree  
SG 11.7cm x 11.7cm



5. Evening Nibbles  
SG 12.7cm x 12.7cm



6. Mary & Child  
SG 12cm x 12cm



7. Silver Tree  
SG 8.5cm x 19cm



8. Song of the Angels  
WBW 17cm x 12cm

WBW – With Best Wishes    SG – Seasons Greetings

## Order Form

Reg Charity No. 251051

### How to order

**By post:** Please return this form to **Fundraising, QEF, Leatherhead Court, Woodlands Road, Leatherhead KT22 0BN**. Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to **QEF Trading Ltd**.

**By phone:** For payment by credit card or debit card phone **01372 841335**

**Online:** Via the QEF website **www.qef.org.uk**

**By Fax:** (24 hour) send your credit card orders on **01372 842761**

**Delivery:** QEF will despatch your order within 14 days from receipt

### Postage and packing

	UK	Overseas
Good Values up to £30	£3.00	£6.00
over £30 up to £100	£6.00	£12.00
over £100	£12.00	£18.00

Item no.	Description	Qty	Item Price	Total
			Total cost of goods	
			Postage and packing	
			Donation	
			<b>TOTAL</b>	

### Gift Aid Declaration

I confirm I am a UK taxpayer and wish QEF to reclaim the tax on this and all donations in the last four years and in the future until I notify you otherwise. I have paid the amount of tax equal to the tax reclaimed. Please Tick Box

### Your credit/debit card details

Name (as written on your card) .....

Visa  Mastercard  Switch/Maestro

Card Number

Start date  /  Expiry date  /  Issue No.  Switch or Maestro only

Security code  Daytime telephone number: .....

Signature: ..... Date: .....

Name: .....

Address: .....

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.....

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Postcode: .....

Help us save money! We'd love to keep you up to date with how your donations are helping our work with young people, but printing and mailing material costs us a lot of money. Email is much cheaper, so if you would like to receive news this way, please give us your email address here:

Email Address

I would like to receive email notifications (by ticking this box you agree to receiving emails from QEF.

QEF WILL NEVER PASS YOUR DETAILS ON TO ANYONE ELSE. We will hold your details to keep you updated with information and fundraising activities. Please write to QEF at Leatherhead Court, Woodlands Road, Leatherhead, Surrey, KT22 0BN If you would like your details removed from our mailing list.