



which they filled with food from the convoy when they arrived.

(09.20) He describes the effect of the refugee camp on the drivers. He says that it was hard to see people he would consider to be just like himself forced to leave their homes and all huddle around a mattress with other families in a camp.

Paul talks about the aid that was taken over in the convoy. The main goods were essentials such as clothing, food and hygiene products. He says that someone also donated a forklift truck as well to move the pallets of aid around.

(11.29) Paul describes initially getting donations locally from Trafford, Urmston, Flixton, Davyhulme with it then coming from all over Greater Manchester and later nationally.

Paul says that people in the UK didn't really understand what was going on. Nobody did. He recalls images of families coming across the mountains from Kosovo into Albania, in the snow. He remembers one particular shot of a family dragging an old man on a piece of plastic because they couldn't carry him. He doesn't think that people, including himself, fully understood the politics of the breakdown of Yugoslavia.

Paul talks about getting back and there being the same amount of aid, again. All the drivers had volunteered their own time and it wasn't realistic to organise another. Another convoy out of the question financially but the aid was all distributed from a freight terminal.

(14.45) That's when Manchester Aid to Kosovo really came to its own and they decided to register as a charity. Soon after, some of the families who were evacuated medically to Manchester and friendships began to form. One of the families asked them to help build a park in their home town.

(17.18) He describes going to Kosovo in 2002 to the town of Podujeva and meeting the mayor to discuss the possibility of building a park in the town. He thought it would be lower down on the list of priorities but the concept was well met and a substantial plot of land donated for the project.

(20.13) Paul describes Podujeva back in 2002. He says there were open sewers and potholes everywhere. He describes the lids to the inspection hatches to the sewers as being missing in the road and it was a dangerous place to walk, especially at night. He says that the infrastructure was terrible and the schools were in a mess. In a lot of the schools, the sanitation in the schools was dreadful and it was in a sad state of affairs. He says that, over the last few years, a lot has been done, lots of building going on with many new schools. He finds it encouraging seeing scale of the recovery.

Paul talks about the Peace Park and how they initially intended to build a small playground and it grew, due to the size of the suggested plot, which included a large forest area, into something much bigger. He says that they got in touch with the Eden Project and Jane Knight offered to go out to Kosovo and inspect the site and she drew up the plans which have been used to create the park. He talks about the park containing a garden where people can plant trees to remember their loved ones and sit and reflect. He says that there is also a children's play area and that they opened up the woods with steps and a path. He describes getting funding from the United Nations Development fund which some local people to work for three months on the park.

Paul talks about being very proud of the park. He says that he is proud of the gardeners who are there every day, Jacob and Rexjep, who maintain the park. He says that he is proud of what MaK does in that sense, in that it employs two guys

which is a massive commitment for such a small charity.

(31.09) Paul describes there being art in the park and how the park has become a catalyst for many other projects. He describes Pam as wanting to get involved in community projects and how they worked with some local artists on an exhibition which led to some of their art being in the park. They worked with an artist from Manchester, Mike Annit, who cast 'Thinking Man' by a local sculptor who now sits on a bench in the garden. Paul says that he thinks that the people in the town appreciate the art and that he considers it to be tasteful.

Paul talks about the I.T. project. He describes the schools as not having anything at all. Paul says that initially MaK would just collect second hand equipment and take it out there themselves and then later they collaborated with Computers for Charities who helped find and load computers. Most of the schools in the town have computer suites now provided by Manchester Aid to Kosovo. He says that the last computer suite was completely built by the local young people. MaK provided, through donation, all the gear and the young men just got on with it, which he finds really encouraging.

(34.26) Paul talks about his Albanian language skills as not being all that great and how he tries to use a couple of phrases, again and again. He has made his own dictionary. He says that body language and a smile go a long way.

Paul discusses the medical equipment shortages in the hospitals. He thinks that funding is the main problem as with money you can buy equipment and pay wages - the main two needs. He would see doctors and nurses washing equipment to reuse it (when it should be disposable) which he found distressing.

Paul worked at the time for the Greater Manchester Ambulance and discusses his contact with ambulance managers during his various visits. He recalls explaining the equipment issued as standard in UK ambulances and how a doctor explained that our ambulances were better equipped than his A & E Department.

Paul talks about various groups of Kosovars visiting England, particularly Manchester, for various projects and reasons at Manchester Aid to Kosovo's invitation. The first was the Major or Podujeve with his interpreter, Bekim so that they could get a feel of how local government is run in Manchester. He says that there was a group of artists who put on an exhibition in Stockport. Lastly, there have been various runners competing in the 10K Manchester BUPA Run including runners in the elite representing Kosovo.

(43.27) Paul describes how Kosovo has defined the last fifteen years of his life. As he retires, he looks forward to the idea of going out to Kosovo as a tourist and visiting old friends, as opposed to project managing and being preoccupied with that. He talks about having to take people to Land Mine Awareness training in the early days as it was potentially still dangerous in Kosovo.

Paul says that he thinks that the Kosovars are settled in Manchester now.

Paul talks about shedding tears over Kosovo. He says that in the early days when he went to Kosovo, he used to sit and have a meal with whoever had invited him and they would want to share their story as a part of the healing process. He heard some horrendous stories of people being murdered and abused and says that some of the things that went on were just unspeakable. He describes sitting there, a grown man, face to face with quite often, other grown men, and how he would just cry. He remembers one man who said to him, when Paul apologised for crying, 'Don't be sorry,' he said, 'All our tears have dried up.'

Paul discussed his thoughts on what lies ahead for Kosovo now. He talks about

problems with the infrastructure and huge problems with corruption. He says that one of the good things about Manchester Aid to Kosovo is that they know all the money they raise or receive in grants, is spent 100% by them as they manage their own projects so there is no room for corruption to creep in.

He talks about how the charity has helped several families and some, two in particular, have become very involved. Paul talks about MaK going to Serbia with Saranda to give evidence against the men involved in the massacre of her family who shot her. He feels that this was a good thing, to get the truth out. Paul thinks this was good for her but also good for MaK's credibility.