

# Injured prison officer receives keys to new home

December 14, 2013 | By [KNews](#) | Filed Under [News](#)

Owning a home is something that former Prison Officer Roxanne Whinfield never thought she'd accomplish, but yesterday that dream became a reality as she was handed the keys to her new home at Nabaclis East Coast Demerara by the



Luanne Falconer

Rotary Club of Stabroek.

Whinfield was shot to the head during a daring jailbreak on February 23, 2002. Immediate Past President of the Club Luanne Falconer yesterday told Kaieteur News that it was in February 2012 that the Rotary Club of Stabroek responded to an article in the Kaieteur News which sought the public's assistance in donating a wheelchair to Whinfield.

According to Falconer, it was during the visit to deliver the wheelchair to Whinfield that members of the Club became captivated by her. "She immediately caught us....she was positive, jovial and just showed inner strength despite everything that she has endured" Falconer told Kaieteur News.

It was at this point that the club decided that Whinfield was in need of a 'disability friendly' home, which would enhance her mobility. Falconer further told Kaieteur News that the first thing they did was to approach Habitat for Humanity to discuss a possible collaboration.

"Not only did Habitat for Humanity respond favorably, but offered to prepare the architectural design and costing" Falconer said. According to her, the cost to build the home came in way above what they were expecting but that did not deter them.

Falconer said that their second stop was to Head of State Donald Ramotar who immediately approved what became the highest monetary contribution to the project; \$1.5M.



**Former Prison Officer Roxanne Whinfield receiving a token from the District Governor of the Rotary Club.**

The Guyana Prison Service was the next stop, and the then Director Mr. Dale Erskine was extremely accommodating and offered to contribute all the labour needed for the project. According to Falconer, the entire structure was completely built by prisoners from the Lusignan Prison. The project was also made possible by several cooperate donors which include Wartsila Guyana Inc, Guyana Relief Council, Ansa McAL, Food for the Poor, P and P Insurance Brokers and the Canadian High Commission.

Kaieteur News was told that the land was given to Whinfield by her aunt Joylin Collins.

District Governor of the Club Herve Honora was also present at the ceremony. Honora said he believes that the group has changed the life of Ms Whinfield.

Food for the Poor official Kent Vincent said they have been supporting Whinfield for several years. He added that they enjoy a very good relationship with the Prison Service so when the entity asked for assistance, his company immediately “jumped onboard without thinking and offered help.”

Acting Prison Director Welton Trotz expressed thanks to the Rotary Club of Stabroek for picking up the mantle. According to Trotz, the prison service also played an important part in the project becoming a reality. “Every single block that was used for the construction was built by prisoners

and even officers...they all wanted to get the work done” Trotz told Kaieteur News. Winfield was shot in the head during a daring jailbreak by five criminals while she was on duty at the Camp Street Prison. For several weeks after the incident, Winfield remained in a coma on life support machines. Today she is partially paralysed and is cared for by her sister Jackie.



**The newly built house.**