

Nostalgic Return to Raphael

Anne Boyd from Singleton, long time Ryder Cheshire volunteer, recently retraced her steps to Raphael. Anne first went there as a nurse in 1964 and her story spans some 50 years. This time she travelled to India to attend the wedding of the daughter of **Raju, a former Little White House child**, who Anne had known since he was five years of age, when she worked at Raphael.

Raju's parents lived by begging and Raju was taken into the care of Raphael. Many years later Raju, now a tradesman, lives in Chandigarh with his delightful wife and family. Attending this wedding brought back many memories for Anne and whilst in Dehradun she also met a dozen of those Little White House children now in their 50's – some are employed at Raphael, others employed as teachers, nurses, in hotel management, and elsewhere. They have travelled light years due to Raphael's embrace and the generosity of our valued sponsors.

Anne particularly remembers three polio-affected children, then wearing callipers, and had the pleasure of meeting them all again on this visit -

Firstly **Pratima** who did a course at Melbourne University a few years back, is still smiling and is now doing great work with the Agnes Kunze Hope Project, educating and rehabilitating village children. Anne visited her centre with Raphael's Community Based Rehabilitation team, as they work together. Then **Gita**, with her warm and gentle smile, who still lives at Raphael and works in the Administration Office. Also **Lalu** who lives in Shivpuri Village on the Rispana riverbed and works as a tailor for a Dehradun bus company. His sister, Mariam, works with the Ava Vihar children. Anne particularly recalls Lulu, as also does Margaret Power when she volunteered at Raphael.



Anne Boyd with the wedding party - Raju is on the left

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Raju's daughter Preety and husband Mario on their Wedding Day

2016 RYDER CHESHIRE AUSTRALIA BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

Will be held on 15, 16 and 17 April 2016 in Ballarat, Victoria.

The venue is all inclusive and will host the Conference, the Saturday evening dinner and provide accommodation.

It will be at The Ballarat Lodge Mercure, 613 Main Road, Ballarat, VIC, 3350. Tel 03 5327 1200 www.ballaratlodge.com

When booking, delegates need to mention the Ryder-Cheshire Conference to receive the special rate. Bookings are now open.

The Ballarat Support Group is very excited to be hosting the 2016 Biennial Conference and preparations are in full swing.

GREETINGS FROM OUR PRESIDENT *Peter Newton AO*

I am delighted to report that Ryder-Cheshire maintains its successful humanitarian endeavours both in Australia and at its **TWO OVERSEAS HOMES – RAPHAEL IN INDIA AND KLIBUR DOMIN IN TIMOR-LESTE.**

The Ryder-Cheshire Victorian Homes at Ivanhoe are undergoing major improvements - See Don Sinclair's report on page 5.

Mount Gambier Home Expansion

This Home continues to provide excellent care for the five ladies with cross disabilities and its vision is to duplicate this facility with a similar home for men. Funding of around \$700,000 is needed before this second project can be realised. I

Singleton Home

Integrated Living is still undertaking its excellent work with people with disabilities at our Singleton Home.

Nardy House Opening

In September 2014, a new facility for accommodating people with severe disabilities was opened at Nardy House at Quaama near Bega in NSW. RCF NSW provided a second donation of \$300,000 from a generous bequest to allow this construction to be completed. An earlier donation of \$375,000 from the same bequest enabled Nardy House to commence this project several years ago.

News from Raphael

Raphael continues to provide exceptional care for its residents and patients as well as those in its Community Based Rehabilitation program. We were delighted to learn that Priyo Lall, the Head of Special Education at Raphael, has been awarded the Rajiv Gandhi Manav Seva Award for excellence in the care of children with disabilities by the President of India, Mr Pranab Mukherjee. Congratulations Priyo.

A second home for independent living at Raphael, this time for four boys with disabilities, has been completed to duplicate the very successful Barbara Cottage for girls. Three of the original four girls who resided in the Barbara Cottage improved their living skills to the extent that they were able to return to their families. Also work continues on converting the Little White House to provide extra accommodation for residents with disabilities. When completed, this will lift the available beds in Ava Vihar to 120.

We have had some good contributions towards the tertiary training of four girls and one boy from the Little White House over the next four years. If any supporter has been thinking of doing something about this, further contributions would be most welcomed. The full cost for training each student is over \$2,000 per annum, but part contributions are more than acceptable. Please contact Susie Mackerras on 02 9880 8094 or rydercheshirevolunteersaust@gmail.com for details.

News from Klibur Domin

The big news from Klibur Domin is that the Chairman of the Board of Management, Dr Rui D'Araujo became the Prime Minister of Timor-Leste in February 2015. Dr Rui will stay on the Klibur Domin Board but has resigned as Chairman, with Jose Teixeira taking over that role.

Progress continues at Klibur Domin with the GeneXpert machine now fully operational and significantly improving the detection of Tuberculosis and particularly of Multi Drug Resistant TB. The TB Lab which was commissioned last October now has its stainless steel benches and shelving, thanks to a generous donation by the Ballina Rotary Club. This club is working on arranging Rotary District and International grants for the purchase of a new 4WD vehicle for the Mobile TB Team.

RENEWALS OF SPONSORSHIPS AND OTHER DONATIONS.

THOSE SUPPORTERS WHO LIKE TO MAKE AN ANNUAL DONATION PLEASE REFER TO THE BACK PAGE.

This Newsletter is edited and produced by Evelyn Petters in West Australia
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by 1 October 2015**

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Ryder-Cheshire gratefully acknowledges
David and Neil Coath, of

**PROMPT DISTRIBUTION PTY LTD,
West Heidelberg, Victoria,**
who most generously arrange and pay
for the distribution of this Newsletter.
Thank you David and Neil, we so much
appreciate your generosity.

The Community Based TB Program which started in 2006 has supported the Liquica district to improve TB case detection and treatment and has raised community awareness of the disease of tuberculosis. **Timor Leste has one of the highest incidence rates of new TB cases in South East Asia with 498/100,000 per population having TB each year and it is estimated that the number of deaths due to TB is 87/100,000 per population each year (WHO Global TB report 2014).**

KLIBUR DOMIN (KD) ACTIVITIES INCLUDE;

- **Working** together with health volunteers who live in the villages to focus on TB
- **Facilitating** co-ordination and review meetings with Community Health Centre staff
- **Delivering** case detection and TB health education package through showing TB films in remote areas
- **Providing** TB education at the Government run mobile clinics and in secondary schools
- **Checking** family members of TB patients for signs and symptoms of TB
- **Providing diagnostic services** at Klibur Domin lab (microscopy and GeneXpert tests)



The Klibur Domin TB team works closely with the National TB program through co-ordination with the District Health Staff. The team also supports 121 health volunteers who live in the villages. KD

provides training for these health volunteers, so that they can reach the people in their villages; people who often live far from health facilities and transport is difficult. The health volunteers are integral to the community TB program as they live in these remote villages; they know the people and they speak the local language. They are active in providing TB education, and they supervise the eight months of TB treatment.



When Klibur Domin arranges the community based activities in the villages, the health volunteers also mobilise their family, friends and neighbours to come to the event; such as a TB film night

which is part of a three day TB case detection package. This involves the KD staff visiting people in their homes to detect cases of TB and arranging for people to attend the mobile clinic that KD sets up in their village. The lab technician from KD also participates in this activity and can prepare the sputum samples ready for microscopy.

The KD team has developed a short motto in Tetum language “Nei-Neik, Bei-Beik e kontinua” which means “slowly, repeat, and follow up”. The team believes this approach helps all staff to remember to give appropriate messages and

reinforce knowledge to both health volunteers and the community. The significance of this is that in Timor Leste people do not yet have good health knowledge generally, including TB; therefore the team needs to continually be working to increase awareness.



Logistics are always an important consideration especially in the rainy season, for example a trip to the remote village with roads in poor condition may only be 30 km but could involve a journey of 2 hours. The KD team uses a range of transport such as 4WD vehicle and motorbikes to navigate in the remote and mountainous terrain.

The main staff in the team have a long term commitment to combatting TB and have worked on the program for an average of 6 years. The team consists of 2 nurses, 2 program staff, 2 lab staff and there are also 2 staff based in the community.

Another way that the program is increasing awareness of TB is through monthly education sessions at the mobile clinics and in schools. Students are encouraged to share this information with their friends and families.



Klibur Domin has been able to diagnose TB through microscopy since 2006. **In 2014 the diagnostic facility was strengthened with the addition of the GeneXpert machine funded through a Rotary International Grant.** This advanced technology is highly sensitive

in diagnosing TB and can also diagnose drug resistant strains of TB. From September until March 69 tests were conducted. 11 had a positive result for TB; 3 of those being multi drug resistant (MDR-TB). This rapid test means that if resistant strains of TB are detected appropriate treatment can be commenced quickly at the MDR-TB inpatient facility at KD; the only such facility in Timor Leste.

All of these activities together with the work of the District Health Staff have resulted in 42 cases of TB being diagnosed from January to March 2015 (37 pulmonary TB and 5 cases of other forms called extra-pulmonary TB).



Klibur Domin is extremely grateful for extra financial support from Ryder-Cheshire Australia this year. Two long term donors of the community TB program ceased funding in 2014 because of their internal financial constraints, but Ryder-Cheshire Australia has stepped in to ensure the community TB program can continue in 2015.

My Raphael Family by Karen

When I was asked to submit an article about my time at Raphael in October and November 2014, it was hard to know where to start.

My 19-year-old daughter and I spent almost two months at Raphael, so there's no shortage of amazing experiences to share. My fear is not being able to do Raphael justice in just one article.

India itself provided a sensory overload: the noises, the smells, the tastes, the sights and above all else the emotions. And while I had heard that a volunteer experience can be life-changing, I had no idea how true that could be.



In my daily life as a mental health support worker, I've always viewed myself as fairly level-headed, sensible, and thought I had seen my fair share of life's injustices, and the ability of

people to rise above these. That was until I spent time at Raphael.

To describe my experience using just one word, it would have to be "family". **Raphael felt like a very large and loving family.** The children at Raphael were accepting of us and they were enthusiastic and eager to be in our company. The teachers and staff were so warm and welcoming and went out of their way to make us feel at home. I had a sense at Raphael that all were equal - from the children, the staff, and the volunteers through to the Brigadier. We were all just part of the one big happy family.

Our volunteer group totalled nine people, ranging in age from 19 through to almost 80. We came from different corners of the world, and our professions included a student, a journalist, a bishop, a fireman, and several community service workers. Even a vegetarian and a vegan were represented, just to highlight our differences! But somehow we all just seemed to fit and work together. By the time we said our goodbyes, the floods of unexpected tears were evidence of the closeness that had developed. You can't help but become part of the Raphael family, it's just what happens when you build such strong bonds.

Music and Art Bring Joy

Ava Vihar resident, Megha, sponsored by the Singleton Support Group, loves her guitar.

Here she is playing at an evening soiree (during Anne Boyd's visit) with help from Elizabeth, and Chhavi and Ashu also enjoying the fun. Volunteers Elizabeth and Kane, two delightful New Zealanders and each with an autistic sibling, were on their second volunteer stint at Raphael, conducting music and art sessions with the Ava Vihar residents.



Picture per Anne Boyd

Volunteers Make Us Happy

My name is Chhavi, I am 22 years old and I live at Raphael.

When volunteers visit to Raphael we like them. They spend the money to come. They come to do social work, helping and meeting us in a different country.

They introduce their country. They like going cities in India. They are talking of time (difference) of their country and India. It is very useful.

They play games, music with us like snap, (teach) computer skill, communication skill. I improved my English speaking. I improved my English spelling. They visit at Barbara cottage. I am making



Chhavi likes using the computer

tea for volunteers. What we make they like, like socks and muffler. They show us story book. We tell them nice your work. We are happy. They come to festival celebrations and enjoy with children.

They like to help in the classes and rehabilitative workshop. We show them our country, animals and families photos.

Human Story - Mystery of the missing belongings !

Dinesh Rana, first came to Raphael in 2009 and was a quiet child who barely mixed with other children. He had limited vocabulary and did not talk much. Although attending school in his native village, he was behind academically compared with other students and at 12 years he was only able to copy his name and count numbers to 10.

At Raphael he was given a chance of a regular school curriculum where writing, speech and meaningful understanding were focused on.

Today we are proud to say, Dinesh is following a pre-school curriculum. He is now able to read words, count up to 100, and match names.

Recently, some of the boys in the hostel were complaining that they were losing their new clothes and shoes. A search began, with all the staff and children looking desperately. One of the boys spotted his missing shoes but they were with Dinesh's belongings and had his name written in capitals - **DINESH RANA**.

This the result of him being taught writing skills, so Dinesh was practising writing his name on everything! In fact, he picked up writing so well that if a child in Ava Vihar likes something that belongs to another child, they simply approach Dinesh who obliges by writing their name on the stuff!

Over a period he has realised that writing a name on somebody else's belongings is not appropriate. He however loves writing and keeps practising this skill.

Volunteering - My Lifetime Highlight By Bob

My five and a half months spent as a volunteer in India will always be a highlight of my not-unadventurous 80 years. Last year, I felt it was time for a volunteering challenge – and turned to the internet for options. The answer came on the Raphael website, which spelt out a series of challenges – foreign travel, work with people with a variety of disabilities, a different language and diet. Ideal, I thought.

Ignoring the well-meant deterrents from friends (too many challenges, too late in life, etc.), I applied for a residency from July to mid-December. It was approved, and I was pleased to note the only costs involved were flights, travel insurance, and a very reasonable monthly amount for board and lodging.

Raphael is set among trees on a 9.3ha site on the outskirts of the city of Dehradun, in the state of Uttarakhand in northern India. Dehradun has a variety of stores and bazaars, with western goods and an ATM in a nearby local store. Accommodation for volunteers consists of comfortable self-contained double bedrooms with bathrooms attached, and a communal kitchen and mess area. A cook prepares all volunteers' meals in the kitchen – all vegetarian, but in good variety.

Volunteers are given a choice of work while at Raphael - but a decision can take a while. I started in the sheltered workshop, but decided after a couple of weeks I could contribute more in the computer and photographic areas. One resident with cerebral palsy had been given a laptop computer by a donor so I helped her to become familiar with its operation. I also helped teachers with their new tablet computers and wrote a manual on their use. I was also able to archive Raphael's photographic collection, and produced a photographic staff directory to help new volunteers identify staff. I also took a number of photographs of staff and residents to fit a variety of needs. In most of these activities I was involved with staff and residents, and I was very impressed by the dedication of the staff and the cheerfulness of residents. This was despite some high degrees of disability, both physical and intellectual.

Twice I was fortunate to travel with Raphael's Community-Based Rehabilitation Team, and on one trip I met **Akash Rawatan**, a 24-year-old with intellectual impairment who lives with his parents Urmila and Ramesh in the suburb of Badowala. Akash was quite excited about his wedding the following day to a girl from the city of Srinagar, some five hours' drive away. The marriage was arranged by the parents and, although the couple have met only once, and their main contact has been over the telephone. After the wedding the couple will live with Akash's parents and his two brothers. Akash works at the village petrol station. Raphael staff trained him in money-handling, enabling him to obtain work paying 4000 rupees (AU\$74) a month - close to the minimum full-time wage.

Both at Raphael and while travelling, our group was sensible to risks. Around 37.7 million Indians are affected by water-borne diseases annually, and 1.5 million children are estimated to die of diarrhoea alone. We drank bottled water, and were always glad to return to Raphael, to escape ever-present city smog, which smells like rancid cooking oil. There are many challenges in India, but my lasting impression is of colourful and intelligent people who have a lot to teach the world, especially when it comes to religious tolerance. It was with genuine regret that I left Raphael and the many friends I made there. Volunteering at Raphael is an experience I can recommend to anyone.

After 33 Years Homes Still Play a Vital Role

By Don Sinclair

The Ryder-Cheshire Victorian Homes Foundation held its 33rd Annual General Meeting in September 2014. The Homes continue to play a vital role in providing high-quality, low-cost accommodation for patients and carers attending various Melbourne hospitals.

The Homes have 43 en-suite twin bed units and provided some 16,581 bed-nights during 2013-14 for 2,412 individuals. An average of 47 new residents arrived each week.

The Home depends on the services of Sister Jane Gorey CSB, our Resident Carer and her team of more than 60 volunteers in the relief of suffering. The Homes truly are an oasis of calm and peace for many country and interstate people being treated in Melbourne hospitals.

An increasing demand for easier access to upper floors has been recognised. An architectural and engineering study was completed and a major project involving the installations of lifts in two buildings is well underway. Construction work involves the closure of each building in turn for many weeks so that the availability of accommodation is limited. The committee believes the benefits to residents will be worth the disruption and cost involved in this project. It is anticipated that the project will be complete later in 2015.

VALE The Hon John Toohy AC QC of Perth WA Passed away April 2015 age 85.

Former President of Ryder-Cheshire Foundation WA, John was a very special person who achieved great things in his life. His exceptional legal career culminated in his years as a Justice of the High Court. He had a great commitment to the humanitarian work of the Ryder-Cheshire Foundation, particularly with regard to our homes in India, Timor-Leste and Perth and he was a long time Raphael sponsor. He will be much remembered for his active involvement and contribution in Ryder-Cheshire.

Ryder-Cheshire extends sympathy to his wife Loma and family in their sad loss.

“KLIBUR DOMIN – Sharing with Love” by RCA President Peter Newton AO

This book tells the story of Peter's search in 2000 for a way in which Ryder-Cheshire in Australia could assist the traumatised country of Timor-Leste. With advice from then Major-General Peter Cosgrove Commander of the International Force in Timor Leste, he settled on starting a Home, initially to take the overflow of patients from the Red Cross National Hospital in Dili. This book tells the story of how Peter got Klibur Domin up and running, how it has developed, the role of Australian volunteers, and the way in which the local people have stepped up to take over management. This account of the first thirteen years makes inspiring reading.

Cost \$10 each plus \$4 postage per copy.

Contact Anthea Swann 03 9877 7084, or antheaswann@bigpond.com

Adelaide Friends of Ryder-Cheshire

Sadly this small and committed group under the leadership of Patricia Frith has decided it is unable to carry on due to dwindling numbers. Trish has held the fort in Adelaide since RCF SA headquarters moved away to Mount Gambier in 2009. We thank her very warmly for her dedication and hard work for Ryder-Cheshire, and the relief of suffering, in a variety of ways over many many years.

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT RYDER-CHESHIRE

YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE IN RYDER-CHESHIRE'S HUMANITARIAN WORK

Sponsors are **URGENTLY NEEDED** and essential to allow us to maintain support and develop much needed programs at Raphael in India and Klibur Domin in East Timor

RAPHAEL

There are two ways you can become a sponsor:

- **Sponsor an individual resident:**
 - Regular updates about the sponsored resident's progress are provided from Raphael
- **Choose a program to sponsor from the following:**
 - **TB program.** There are 26 beds in the ward, together with an out-patient program treating over 2000 cases each year.
 - **Community Based Rehabilitation Program.** An outreach team supports children with disabilities in their villages.
 - **Day Care Centre Program.** Provides education and therapy to 160 children and adults with Disabilities

KLIBUR DOMIN

You can sponsor any of the following three programs:

- **Inpatient Services Program .** Provides care for patients recovering from illnesses and injuries.
- **TB Program.** Includes in-patient and out-patient services, a mobile TB Team, and a Multi Drug Resistant TB Ward
- **Community Based Rehabilitation Program.** An outreach team supports children with disabilities in their villages.

SPONSORSHIP COSTS

- The usual cost is \$1 per day, or \$365 per year, but sponsors may contribute less or more, if preferred.

Can you help?



How You Can Help

The Ryder-Cheshire Overseas Aid Fund is a Tax Deductible Gift Recipient (ABN 15 362 991 732), and all donations and sponsorship payments of \$2 and over are tax deductible. Please complete this form and post to:

Ryder-Cheshire Australia, PO Box 51, Glen Iris, Victoria 3146. A receipt will be posted to you.

I would like to make a donation of \$

- to be used where most needed ()
- to Klibur Domin in East Timor () *Tick one*
- to Raphael in Northern India ()

I am interested in becoming a Sponsor for \$365 or \$ (other amount) at

- Raphael () *Tick one*
- Klibur Domin ()

I would like information on how to make a Bequest to support the work of Ryder-Cheshire.

Name Address

Telephone (..) Email Address

My cheque for \$ is enclosed **OR** Here are my Credit Card details

Visa/MasterCard No - - - - / - - - - / - - - - / - - - - Expiry Date - - / - - Amount \$

Name on Card Signature