



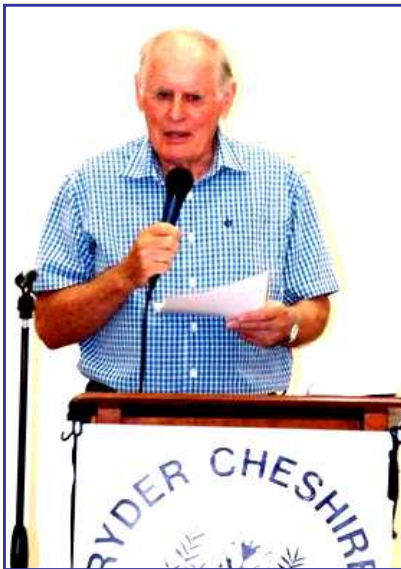
# Ryder-Cheshire News

## Newsletter of Ryder-Cheshire Australia

*“ for the relief of suffering ”*

**ISSUE NUMBER 81 MAY 2013**

### Sydney & Melbourne Book Launches of “Barbara: Committed to Giving. A Volunteer’s Story”



At the Launches. Patrick Lewis, the author, and husband of Barbara.

They gathered to celebrate a book launch - but friends and family of Barbara Lewis also celebrated her generous and inspiring life.

**“Barbara: Committed to Giving”** is the story of a dedicated Ryder Cheshire Foundation volunteer, who gave decades to supporting our homes both in India, and Australia. Written by her husband Patrick Lewis, he explained at book launches in Melbourne and Sydney that parts of the biography were based on letters Barbara had written in the 1960s, when she was in India.

Selecting one reading from the book, Patrick described the occasion when Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, visited Raphael. Barbara saw herself as a privileged bystander



At the Sydney Launch, Father Paul Coleman with volunteers & friends of Raphael.

watching two great leaders, Nehru and Leonard Cheshire VC, meet, talk and interact in what was then a small mud brick primary school for mentally challenged children. How far we have come!

### THIS ISSUE FEATURES EXPERIENCES OF OUR VALUED VOLUNTEERS

Book launches in Melbourne & Sydney	Page 1
President’s message	Page 2
Notices & contacts	Page 2
Volunteering with Ryder Cheshire	Page 3
Volunteers’ stories	Page 4
Human story from Raphael	Page 5
How you can help	Page 6

**The Melbourne book launch**, on December 5, saw RCF Victoria President Peter McConnell welcome 80 guests to the RAAFA Auditorium. RCA National President Peter Newton launched the book.

**In Sydney**, Christine Hannan, President of RCF NSW, told more than a 100 guests that she had worked with and admired Barbara for many years. The event, on February 20, was held at the Lavender Bay Church Hall. Anne Boyd, who had worked with Barbara at Raphael and at other Cheshire Homes, spoke of challenging times together - but said tears of worry and uncertainty were often turned to laughter and joy by Barbara’s indomitable spirit. She also recalled a reunion in London at the 1998 International Conference of the Cheshire Homes when Barbara and Anne were able to show two over-awed Indian paraplegics the sights of London.

Others to share their stories included Pam Harrison, Jenny Coleman, Leila McCreton, Pam Russell and Patricia McDonell, all of whom had devoted many years to the Ryder Cheshire Foundation. Also among the guests were Caroline Jones AO, Sr Mary Shanahan RSCJ, and many others whose lives had been touched by Barbara in many and different ways. Likewise in Melbourne, where Barbara had spent her early years, many dear friends and relatives attended.

At both gatherings, a video was played of Barbara explaining the symbolism of the Ryder Cheshire emblem, a red feather (courage) surrounded by rosemary (remembrance). Barbara’s recorded words brought her presence even closer to the guests.

Fr Paul Coleman SJ concluded the formal part of the evening at both events, sharing his feelings of amazement and wonder at the life of quiet heroism of his sister Barbara - the depth of this striking him more now as he reflected back upon her generous life.

## GREETINGS FROM OUR PRESIDENT

The mission of Ryder-Cheshire is to relieve the suffering of the sick, the disabled and the destitute without discrimination. We strive always to uphold the dignity and increase the self-image of those we are helping.

Our work continues in our three Australian homes (Singleton in NSW, Mount Gambier in SA, and Ivanhoe in Melbourne), and at Raphael in India and Klibur Domin in East Timor, where staff and volunteers work hard to achieve our mission in the most caring, efficient and effective way.

Volunteers are essential to the work of Ryder-Cheshire, both in Australia and at our overseas homes. All Board and Committee members of our Foundations and Support Groups are unpaid, and our homes could not operate without volunteers. This means we can keep our costs to the absolute minimum. But still funds are crucial, and we raise them by the sale of Christmas cards, film days, dinners and the like. This newsletter edition will give readers a good feel for the great rewards that volunteering delivers.

At the Annual General Meeting in April, Board members were reminded that our overall financial situation remains very tight. But occasionally there are bright spots, such as bequests or generous donations. One such bright spot: the Holy Cross Parish in Caulfield South recently provided \$8,500 to fund the cost of constructing an office for the Multi Drug-Resistant TB ward at Klibur Domin. That figure adds to more than \$9,000 donated by the parishioners of Holy Cross and its sister parish, St Joseph's at Elsternwick, earlier this year.

With the tax year almost gone, readers might like to consider donating or taking out a sponsorship. You can be assured that 100% of your donation will reach the nominated home, and will fund vital care of the sick, the disabled and the destitute. While many larger charities struggle to reach a target of 65-70% of donations being directly passed on, please know that your donation to RCA is really making a life-changing difference. To help, please see the form on page 6.

*Peter Newton, President, Ryder-Cheshire Australia.*

### MAY WE SEND YOUR NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL ?

To help reduce printing and postage costs we can now send you the Newsletter as a PDF by email.

You will need Adobe Reader which can be downloaded free from the internet.

Please send your email address to [antheaswann@bigpond.com](mailto:antheaswann@bigpond.com)  
Include your name and postal address.

This Newsletter is edited and produced by Evelyn Petters in West Australia  
Email [petters@iinet.net.au](mailto:petters@iinet.net.au)  
Tel (08 9349 5043)

Newsletters are issued in May and November each year and the next issue will be published in early November 2013

Contributors should submit articles and photos by e-mail to

**Evelyn Petters ([petters@iinet.net.au](mailto:petters@iinet.net.au)) by 1 October 2013**

**BEQUESTS** The work of Ryder-Cheshire homes is ongoing. Leaving a gift in your will is a great way to support our works. Your gift regardless of size will be gratefully received. This Newsletter contains contact details in each state. Simply give your nearest contact person a call. They will be happy to answer any questions about Ryder-Cheshire, and how to go about leaving a gift in your Will.

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.

## RYDER-CHESHIRE AUSTRALIA

### Founders:-

Group Captain Lord Cheshire  
VC OM DSO DFC  
Lady Ryder of Warsaw  
CMG OBE

### National Patron:-

Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC  
Governor General of  
the Commonwealth of Australia

## CONTACTS

### National President

Peter Newton AO 03 9894 3191  
[peter.newton@ryder-cheshire.org](mailto:peter.newton@ryder-cheshire.org)

### National Secretary

Anthea Swann 03 9877 7084  
[antheaswann@bigpond.com](mailto:antheaswann@bigpond.com)

### Adelaide Friends

Patricia Frith 08 8556 2604  
[folly8@internode.on.net](mailto:folly8@internode.on.net)

### Ballarat Support Group

Leo Rennie 03 5333 3111  
[leorennie@hotmail.com](mailto:leorennie@hotmail.com)

### Bendigo Support Group

Hugh Elphinstone 03 5443 1163  
[hugh\\_elphinstone@hotmail.com](mailto:hugh_elphinstone@hotmail.com)

### Mt Gambier Home

Neville Gilbertson 08 8725 5510  
[kaynev62@bigpond.com](mailto:kaynev62@bigpond.com)

### New South Wales

Christine Hannan 02 9416 7569  
[c.hannan@optusnet.com.au](mailto:c.hannan@optusnet.com.au)

### Singleton Support Group

Cheryl Nesbitt 02 6573 1487  
[cherylnesbitt@bigpond.com.au](mailto:cherylnesbitt@bigpond.com.au)

### South Australia

Carol Chislett 08 8725 5091  
[carolfchis@bigpond.com](mailto:carolfchis@bigpond.com)

### Victoria

Peter McConnell 03 9939 7501  
[marg.peter@optusnet.com.au](mailto:marg.peter@optusnet.com.au)

### Victorian Homes Ivanhoe

Ivanhoe Home 03 9254 2400  
Jill Moor 03 9816 9889  
[jillmoor@pics.com.au](mailto:jillmoor@pics.com.au)

### Overseas Volunteers' Co-ordinator

Susie Mackerras 02 9880 8094  
[rydercheshirevolunteersaust@gmail.com](mailto:rydercheshirevolunteersaust@gmail.com)

### Website Co-ordinator

Terry Warr  
[twarr@ozemail.com.au](mailto:twarr@ozemail.com.au)

### Website

[www.ryder-cheshire.org](http://www.ryder-cheshire.org)

### Newsletter

Evelyn Petters 08 9349 5043  
4 Arkana Way, Balcatta, WA 6021  
[petters@iinet.net.au](mailto:petters@iinet.net.au)

# VOLUNTEERING WITH RYDER-CHESHIRE

Ryder Cheshire warmly welcomes volunteers to work in a range of advisory and practical roles, within Australia and at Ryder-Cheshire Homes in India and East Timor.

By Kathy Oswin, Communications Group, RCF Victoria

Volunteering is essential for the work of Ryder Cheshire Australia (RCA). This is just as true at the Homes we support in Australia (at Ivanhoe, Singleton and Mt Gambier), as at Raphael in India and Klipur Domin in East Timor, and across the various State Foundations and Support Groups. Volunteers have been contributing to the work of RCA since its inception over fifty years ago.

The committees which form RCA, the state and regional groups, and the groups governing each of the Homes, are composed entirely of volunteers who give generously of their time and expertise. A small amount of money from fundraising activities is set aside each year to pay for independent financial auditing and occasional costs such as postage, paper and printing. This allows RCA to assure donors that 100% of all donated money, including sponsorship payments, will reach the Homes and their outreach teams, to be used directly for the relief of suffering.

Within Ryder Cheshire Homes, volunteers undertake a variety of roles such as construction and maintenance; patient care; nursing; therapy; teaching; assisting teachers, carers and therapists; entertaining patients; technology; administrative support and fundraising. Some people volunteer at a RCA home over many years, perhaps on a weekly basis, while others venture overseas to live-in and provide voluntary work at a Home for periods of time ranging from a few weeks to a year or more. Volunteers range in age from students to retirees, some have specific professional training, and all bring their own special gifts and abilities to their work within the Homes.

Volunteering is, of course, a two way street, and many volunteers say that they have gained much more than they have given. Volunteers often acquire new life experiences, skills, friendships, insights and community links.

RCA would like to take this opportunity to again thank all our volunteers, both past and present, for their inestimable contributions in working towards the relief of suffering. And, for anyone interested in becoming a volunteer please follow the link on the following web page - <http://ryder-cheshire.org>

With their kind permission, we would like to share with you some comments and photos from some volunteers who have recently returned from Raphael and East Timor. Their stories follow.

## Jamie McCartney from UK Volunteered at Raphael

**EVEN having read about Raphael, arriving as a volunteer surpassed any expectations I'd had.** I came away with newfound understanding, a love of children with mental and physical disabilities, some basic Hindi, increased self-confidence, and thoughts of a possible career change and a different outlook on life. Not bad for three months!

This extraordinary, beautiful place sees tireless help delivered in every direction. To be part of the strong sense of community and cause is a very special feeling.

At Raphael, I met other volunteers, most as inexperienced as

me, and it was refreshing to share basic quarters and excellent food three times a day.

On my first day I was placed in a classroom within the school and happily stayed for a month. Other options include the candle making unit, weaving and bag making, the early intervention centre, physiotherapy department. And in 'The Little White House', children whose parents have suffered leprosy, have a hostel.

The school has 40 resident children aged between roughly 8 and 16, and another 40 day-pupils who have intellectual or physical disabilities. Warming to them was easy, and I soon found I could offer help with computer classes.

In the evenings I joined the children for sports - the best part of

the day. Stepping out of the volunteers' quarters with a plastic bat and ball, and seeing beaming kids run over shouting my name was worth every ounce of energy I gave them.

Gradually, I became more of a teacher's assistant, developing the confidence to help with lessons. I spent hours creating interactive wall posters, puzzles, and teaching aids, and hanging photos of the children on the doors of the classrooms (which they love to see).

Seeing a place like Raphael succeed is inspiring, and yet financially, they are only just getting by. Resources are in short supply, and donations and help are still vital to the place's continued existence. I have already asked to return next year, and I can see myself returning year after year and look forward to seeing these incredible children grow up and progress.



Jamie and Kumar, with teachers Manjhu and Nandika run a stall for Raphael

## Amelia Hogan from Ballarat Volunteered at Raphael

**I arrived at Raphael in November 2012 and it was one of the best experiences I have ever had.**

Raphael offers volunteers a choice of school, hospital or adult education programs, and no matter which you chose, you will find yourself swept up in the spirit of the place.

I helped out in the vocational class, with a group of teen students learning practical skills. The class was blessed with an amazing teacher who taught with compassion and dedication.

Working as a teacher's aide in the classroom gives you insight into how children and young people develop. The school offers specific curriculum to address student needs, and volunteers also come away with a fresh understanding of people management, conflict resolution and working cross-culturally.

Raphael really does offer a true exchange. That is, while you give your time and energy and incorporate your skills usefully into the program, you in turn come away with valuable lessons that can be applied back home.

At Raphael, I found all staff - the executive, the administrative, teaching and medical - to not only be welcoming and accommodating, but also inspiring. The same goes for students and residents. Their stories both challenge and enlighten.

Volunteers are managed well, and kept informed on important information, and plenty of people are willing to give advice and assistance. This support is priceless with understanding the operations at Dehradun. **I'm sure any volunteers would have a very memorable experience at Raphael and I look forward to visiting again in the future.**

## MORE STORIES FROM VOLUNTEERS

### David SEARL from Ballarat Volunteered at Raphael

A STINT at Raphael isn't easy, and it was a full month before I felt comfortable in my role. Getting to know the staff I had most to do with, and getting a handle on Indian names, I slowly got into the rhythm of Raphael. My five-day working week was spent in the vocational workshop, mainly making and packing candles. The teacher had up to 10 students to supervise, all with specific jobs to meet orders for around 30,000 candles for Diwali, the Hindu Festival of Lights. I think I can say that my being there for this very busy period was benefit to the teacher!

To get to know the children and residential staff quickly, I joined in afternoon playtime. Out came the cricket bats, frisbees and basketballs - lots of fun for the volunteers. The kids particularly love cricket, and it was not unusual to be involved in two or three games at once! Just as engaging, I enjoyed talking to the guys in the "chronic" ward. They have had a lot of contact with volunteers over many years - people who have really cared for them. They look forward to going for walks or simply just chatting.

After Diwali, a holiday for the staff and students, I moved to the block printing workshop. Again, an opportunity to appreciate local tradition, and also to interact with and care for people with special needs. During my stay, I also visited Amritsar, a famous Sikh city, home of the Golden Temple - a must see on any traveller's list.

**I treasure many memories, and appreciate the chance to live in India, not just pass through. Most importantly though, the people I met at Raphael, the other volunteers and the children - thank you for taking me out of my comfort zone, getting me playing games, making me laugh and being inspirational.**

### PAUL KOPANIDIS from Melbourne Volunteered at Klibur Domin

As a final year medical student at the University of Melbourne, I was fortunate to travel back to Klibur Domin over November and December last year. Much had changed since my previous short visit as a physiotherapist in 2007. The crucial Multi Drug Resistant Tuberculosis program had grown, and many facilities for patients and staff had improved. An important constant, however, was the Klibur Domin staff, who greeted me again with welcoming smiles.

During this short visit, I conducted a research project examining the effects of drug side effects on TB treatment drug compliance. It is common to develop side effects of drug therapy due to the multiple and long term therapies required to treat TB. In the setting of the emerging threat of multi drug resistance TB, drug compliance is an increasing priority as failure to adequately treat TB leads to resistant strains.

With the support of local staff conducting interviews with both inpatients receiving intensive therapy, and community patients receiving continuation phase therapy, I experienced interesting cultural issues around interviewing patients for the study. The results have been reported to the Klibur Domin staff. If you are interested to learn more, please contact me on paulk@student.unimelb.edu.au.

As well as my research, I also helped local staff in rehabilitation programs. Local community-based rehabilitation workers Rosario and Carlos should be commended on the way the program has developed, and especially for their success helping children go to school.

**I'll make my third visit to Klibur Domin in the middle of the year, when I complete my medical elective at the national hospital in Dili.**

### Siobhan Reeves from Melbourne Volunteering at Klibur Domin

I am currently volunteering at Klibur Domin, Timor-Leste for one year. I have been here a little over four months now, and I am already dreading saying goodbye!



Siobhan Reeves at Klibur Domin

I was born in Melbourne but grew up in rural Victoria and then in County Clare, Ireland.

I studied a Bachelor of Liberal Arts in Sydney, and then a Masters in International Relations at the

University of Melbourne last year. I have worked with various volunteer programs such as hospice visits (in Ireland), and refugee tutoring and soup van programs in Australia. I also was fortunate enough to volunteer with the Leprosy Mission Australia Headquarters in Melbourne for a few months, which gave me great insight into development work overseas. A friend told me about the work of Ryder Cheshire Australia, and I was inspired to apply to volunteer.

My work here has been varied, with the opportunity to learn so much and contribute in different ways. As well as report writing, data entry and translating, I have also started work on a booklet to educate primary school children about tuberculosis, developed a new website for Klibur Domin in English and Tetum, written a case-study on one of our MDR-TB patients for a report by the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine at Harvard Medical School, and the National Institute for Research in Tuberculosis in Chennai, India.

Klibur Domin is a wonderful community. I enjoy working with the director, Joaquim, and all the staff have been very welcoming, and encouraging of my feeble Tetum skills! I was recently quite ill, and I am sure my fast recovery is due to the kindness of Maria, Carmen and Carlos who took me into the Dili clinic, and regularly visited me at the volunteers' cottage. They have also taken me to Liquisa beach with some of the CBR clients staying at St Damien's Respite Centre; these are lovely outings. I feel like I have a family away from home, and I am so grateful for their kindness and generosity, as well as the support from Ryder-Cheshire Australia.

I am also grateful to be spending time in this beautiful country, and the lovely village of Tibar. When I first arrived in Timor, I spent time with two Timorese girls I studied with in Sydney, and visited many places here. One great memory was climbing up the lighthouse in Dili. Apparently very few people have done so but the security guard told us it was no problem! While getting through the manholes was a little scary, the view was well worth it!

**I am blessed to be a small part of such an important healthcare organisation in Timor-Leste. I am constantly learning, and constantly amazed by how much the workers are able to achieve with limited resources. It is inspiring to witness people's lives changing for the better through the assistance of Klibur Domin, and I hope its success will continue long into the future.**

## Human Story from Raphael

**D**evesh Chhetri was born on 1<sup>st</sup> June 1996 with a mild intellectual disability. To the age of 12 years he lived in the family environment but his parents saw in him a need for intervention by specialists in the field of intellectual disability.

Having heard and known about Raphael they brought him with the aim of getting him assessed for admission into Raphael as a Day Scholar and Devesh was granted admission in April 2008 to the Academic Group.

Devesh is very fond of his mother and it took quite sometime for him to accept being away from her and to get adjusted to a new beginning in the company of peers who lived and behaved just like him. Being a Day Centre student where one of his parents (father/mother) always came to leave him at the special school for Raphael, he found that separation from his parents was for a short time every day and gradually he reconciled to this new routine. It was quite an effort on the part of his teachers to assess his real potential and then develop it.

Devesh excelled in every production activity he was put through. It soon became apparent that he had good ability and needed to work in areas which not only carried skill but also some responsibility. Devesh was tried out with duties in the main Administrative Block. His responsibility included opening all offices before the office hours and locking all offices after the office hours. Devesh appears to be enjoying this responsibility. As a matter of fact he has taken upon himself the responsibility of setting up every office every day in an orderly fashion.

The staff members working in different offices have practically become dependent on him. During the day Devesh is sent on official errands which he carries out most efficiently and when unsure without hesitation he seeks advice from anyone, from the CEO downwards. Making photostat copies also interests him a lot and in a matter of few days he has learnt this activity. It appears his future lies in working in offices. Raphael gives him a stipend commensurate with his skill and Devesh's parents walk with pride alongside him.

It is always heartening to see Devesh with his parents whose constant encouragement, support and deep involvement with their child has brought him to a stage where he is almost ready for independent living.



David Searl with Bola, a resident since 1964



Volunteers relax in the Mess at Raphael



Physiotherapists Maygar & Mungli on the CBR round at Raphael

## Raphael Student wins SILVER MEDAL at Special Olympics

As reported in our previous Newsletter, a Raphael Day Centre student, **SUMIT ROY**, had been selected to represent the country in the Special Olympics to be held in South Korea from 26<sup>th</sup> January to 5<sup>th</sup> February 2013. **Sumit Roy participated in Floor Hockey with the Indian contingent of 16 members who won a Silver Medal.**

**WELL DONE SUMIT AND CONGRATULATIONS TO THE TEAM**



Georgia Herron, volunteer from Tasmania, and children at Raphael in 2012  
(Georgia's article was published in our previous Newsletter)



A Raphael student in Georgia's class having fun

## NEW SPONSORS URGENTLY NEEDED !

### YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE IN RYDER-CHESHIRE'S HUMANITARIAN WORK IN EAST TIMOR AND INDIA

Sponsors are essential to allow us to maintain support and develop much needed programs at Raphael and Klibur Domin.

#### RAPHAEL

There are two ways you can become a sponsor:

- **Sponsor an individual resident:**  
Many sponsors develop a relationship with their sponsored resident. This is aided by regular updates 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

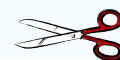
You can sponsor any of the following three programs:

- **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? Become a sponsor now – fill in and forward this form*



### 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 . . . . .