



Ryder-Cheshire News

Newsletter of Ryder-Cheshire Australia

" for the relief of suffering "

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Greetings from our President

Peter Newton

On behalf of the Ryder-Cheshire Australia Board, I wish all our sponsors and supporters a very happy Christmas and a great year in 2013.

Much has been achieved in 2012 in our Australian and overseas homes (Raphael and Klibur Domin). On a sad note, after hosting a very successful Biennial Conference in May, the RCF ACT Foundation found that it could no longer survive as an independent organisation. In October, the Foundation was wound up with its memberships and residual funds being transferred to RCF NSW. I send my thanks to all in the RCF ACT Foundation who supported it over its nearly five decades of fundraising activities. Many people worked extremely hard and their efforts are greatly appreciated. I know that RCF NSW will welcome members from ACT and will provide an excellent service to all ACT supporters and sponsors.

Two major funding grants were approved by the Ryder-Cheshire Australia Board at the Biennial Conference. Raphael needed to secure its boundary, and \$30,000 was provided for a perimeter fence which has now been constructed.

Klibur Domin requested \$33,300 to replace the roofing on four 20 year old buildings. The Indonesian galvanised iron used was of poor quality and the roofs were leaking badly. The project is presently underway using colour-bonded roofing iron from Australia.

I visited Klibur Domin in East Timor in October and noted many improvements since my last visit 12 months ago. Three buildings have been extensively renovated. The Volunteers' Cottage, the Administration Building and, what was previously known as the "Old Clinic" are now in top class condition. When the roofing project is completed, four more buildings will have greatly extended lives.

Of greater importance however are the programs in place to treat and support the sick and disabled people under Klibur Domin's care. All these programs are proving extremely successful. Likewise, we continue to receive excellent reports on the work being undertaken at Raphael. Clearly the funds raised in Australia through sponsorships, donations and functions are allowing these two homes to achieve outstanding results.

As we enter the festive season, I know our supporters will spare a thought for those in East Timor and India who live in conditions that we can scarcely imagine here in the "lucky country". Ryder-Cheshire is doing what it can to help them but we can only continue to do this with your generous support.

Persistence delivers Olympic dream at Raphael

When Sumit Roy's family admitted him to Raphael, they never imagined where he might end up.

The Indian boy was born on 20th September, 1991, into a poor family. As he grew up, his parents were concerned about his development - and after visiting Raphael, he was admitted to Raphael's Special Day Centre School on 26th April 2002 with mild intellectual disability.

Little Sumit's love of sport - and his natural flair - were noticeable right from the beginning, and Raphael staff made constant efforts to encourage his interest.

At the same time, Sumit completed initial education and training, then was moved to the Rehabilitative Workshop. There, he gained confidence developing his skills in Paper Bag making, and became an effective member of the team.



At the same time, Raphael's sports coordinator, Kishan Singh Rana, continued to encourage his love of sport. Sumit started attending sports camps under the aegis of Special Olympics, and showed an extraordinary aptitude for 'Floor Hockey'.

In 2008 Sumit was short-listed for participation in the World Winter

Games for the Intellectually Disabled - but was unable to make final selection. Yet he and his coach Kishan Rana did not feel discouraged.

The World Winter Games are to be held in Korea in January 2013. Kishan Rana left no stone unturned to prepare Sumit for the mega event - and the pair's hard work was rewarded. Sumit has been selected to participate as part of a 16 member Indian team for the international event.

Imagine the pride and excitement for Sumit, for his coach, for his parents and for Raphael. The 21-year-old has added a feather not only to his cap, but to the caps of all his friends, well-wishers and supporters. We wish him every success in the ensuing World Olympics for children and adults with intellectual disabilities.

A PARTICULARLY PROUD MOMENT FOR RAPHAEL

INDIA

TIMOR LESTE

AUSTRALIA

Painting a brighter future for Klibur Domin

by Neville Gilbertson

In May and June this year two teams of volunteers from Mount Gambier helped renovate the "Old Clinic" in partnership with Ryder - Cheshire South Australia which funded the project. Its purpose was to provide better office accommodation for the Mobile TB Team and other support staff. Neville Gilbertson as a member of both RCF and Rotary recruited the seven volunteers, who were mainly Rotarians from the three clubs in Mount Gambier together with members from Lions and RCF Mount Gambier. Each team spent two weeks at Klibur Domin.



Team members - Don Currie, Neville Gilbertson, Lucia Pichler and Rory McEwen

The trip from Mount Gambier to Dili required a certain amount of stamina with the early morning flights, particularly the 4 am wakeup call for the Darwin-Dili flight. As the plane circled around Dili to land we wondered where the airport was, then a very short runway almost on the beach, came into view. Joaquim Soares, the Director of KD, met us and drove us to Ti-

bar. This introduction to road and traffic conditions in East Timor proved both interesting and valuable for the rest of our stay. Our elected driver, Bill Russon, quickly developed the skill to avoid on-coming traffic and the serious potholes at the same time.

When we arrived the local builders had already started on the renovation. The roof had been removed, window frames replaced and most of the paintwork on the walls removed. On our first day of work, our role in the project became clear when Gregorio, Manager of Support Services, presented us with emery paper, paint, brushes and rollers. At changeover with the second team the roof was on, floor tiling completed, electrical wiring done and plumbing almost finished. The ceiling, window glazing and new doors were the last major works to complete the building. With painting of the renovation finished, the second team's main activity was a complete repaint of one of the inpatients' accommodation buildings. By the end of the project we all had achieved "Master Painter" status!

The Volunteers' Cottage provided us comfortable accommodation and we quickly adapted to "showering" with our mandi. Lunch and dinner were delivered to us from the kitchen and proved to be most acceptable, both quality and quantity, although we never did manage to eat all the rice! Maria, the Finance Officer, gave us a bottle of her homemade chili - just a dash!! We also shared the Cottage with "Gordon" the gecko who had taken up residence in the roof just above John Kirby's bed. Gordon's calls throughout the night ensured that the light sleepers got only that. We thought we had solved the problem when we grabbed him from behind a bookcase and relocated him some distance away. But alas he returned like a possum.

The first weekend of our visit saw the installation of the new President of Timor-Leste and the 10-year anniversary of independence celebrations. A few days before this event Bishop Deakin from Melbourne, who is a strong supporter of Ryder-Cheshire, visited Klibur Domin and brought with him Sister Rose and Sister Terry from the Franciscan convent across the road.

We finished the visit by singing "Advance Australia Fair" and they responded with a fine rendition of their 5 - verse national anthem. Through Rotary and Ryder-Cheshire it is hoped to build on this relationship into the future. At the end of the four weeks all team members felt they had made a worthwhile contribution to Klibur Domin and thoroughly enjoyed the people and the experience of visiting Timor-Leste and now understood more of its history and culture.



RCF and Rotary Team members John Kirby and Stefani Birkholz with schoolchildren at Klibur Domin

Every day is a joy at Klibur Domin

Before leaving for Timor Leste, Ballarat retiree Fran Hanrahan feared two months of volunteering at Klibur Domin might be tough

"I have been retired for a few years and I was worried that the long day from 8 am until 5 pm in the heat might prove too much for me," she said.

But the RCA volunteer persisted - and her effort paid off. "Actually it turned out to be like a holiday on a tropical island away from the Ballarat winter!"

Working mainly on computer, Fran helped Joaquim to produce written material, including Klibur Domin's first English-language newsletter. "I went through a quick learning curve!" she said. But Fran was pleasantly surprised at the ease with which she picked up the Tetum language. "With a few greetings and some vocabulary and the English the staff already knew, I was able to communicate satisfactorily - and I enjoyed taking time each evening to learn a few more words and phrases."



Fran with her new friends at Klibur Domin

Her legacy at Klibur Domin includes a set of notes to help other volunteers to teach staff members more English, and to learn more Tetum themselves. She also recommends any visitor to Timor-Leste read James Dunne's account of the troubles over the past half century. (Fran saw some of the country's politics first hand, as Fretelin supporters took to the streets of Dili to protest, following the young country's election.)

But the life-changing work of the Klibur Domin team was the highlight for Fran, including a regional trip with Outreach staff. "It took a rough three-hour ride to the village, and the road took us close to the border with West Timor. If we had continued south we would have reached Balibo - the place of the murder of the western journalists." The team tested villagers for TB, and parents brought forward their children if they were concerned about development abnormalities. A crowd gathered as staff then educated the villagers about TB and Klibur Domin's services.

Fran said the two months made a lasting impression.

"Anyone who can possibly make the effort to spend time in Timor Leste should jump at the opportunity. I enjoyed every day," she said.

It was twelve years ago in September 2000 that the first team of Ryder-Cheshire volunteers travelled from Australia to Tibar village in East Timor to establish a new Ryder-Cheshire home, which soon became known as Klibur Domin, or "Sharing with Love".

They were followed by a team of nine Rotary volunteers who, in just two weeks made the 15 ransacked buildings in the complex habitable and restored the basic services of water, sewerage and electricity.

Our first five patients were admitted on 31st January 2001 to join the 18 elderly and disabled residents who had been living at the home since before the mayhem of September 1999.

How different Klibur Domin looks today. The original buildings have mostly now been restored to a high standard, with some work still underway on the kitchen and with two remaining leaky roofs still to be replaced. We have three new buildings - the Barbara Cottage for the long term residents, the St Damien's Respite Centre and the Multi Drug Resistant TB Ward.

Of even greater importance than the improved facilities are the new programs added over recent years. The Mobile TB Team is doing a marvellous job in detecting and treating TB patients in remote villages in the districts west of Tibar. Thousands of people have been assessed and nearly 500 cases of TB detected and treated since 2008.

In October I went with the Mobile TB Team to several villages west of Dili and I was most impressed with the professionalism of the team. The villagers were briefed on the nature and tell-tale symptoms of the disease and sputum samples were taken and analysed. Those found to be suffering commenced supervised treatment which they stay on until their sputum samples are clear. This program is looked on as model for the treatment of tuberculosis in East Timor and more widely throughout countries where the disease is prevalent.

Ryder-Cheshire is receiving excellent financial and technical support from Target TB in the UK with this program. Target TB is the successor organisation to the Ryder-Cheshire Foundation UK which changed its focus and its name 10 years ago. It is now doing important work in the eradication of TB in a dozen countries world-wide.

The second new program established four years ago is the Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) program for Children with Disabilities. Klibur Domin has treated and supported over 100 children in outlying villages under this program and this is making a huge difference to their lives.

One young lad who Klibur Domin has supported is Isildu who lives in the village of Laclemona. Isildu lost both his parents before he was 7 years old and then had a bicycle accident which left him a paraplegic. For five years he lay on a bamboo bed at the home of his grandmother and aunt, unable to attend school. With our assistance, Isildu is now very mobile in his wheelchair and he is about to complete his primary school education, despite being 19 years old. Next year he will come to Klibur Domin to live in St Damien's Respite Centre and attend a secondary school across the road from Klibur Domin.

The inpatient program is also doing great work in treating patients with fractures, wounds and illnesses including TB and malnutrition. Two of the four original wards are dedicated to the treatment of TB. Patients stay several months or until they are well enough to complete their treatment under supervision in their homes and villages.

There is growing concern regarding the prevalence of Multi Drug Resistant TB in East Timor. Detection is difficult and expensive and sputum samples need to be sent to Adelaide for analysis. Treatment usually involves a cocktail of very strong drugs over a period of twelve months and too often the patients do not survive. Klibur Domin has the only dedicated facility in East Timor for the treatment of this terrible disease.

We are now looking at acquiring an advanced machine to detect MDRTB. The cost is around \$60,000 so we are looking for donors to help fund the acquisition. With this new machine, we know that there will be a far greater number of MDRTB cases detected and therefore a need for more facilities and staff to treat the patients. However without this, the rapid spread of MDRTB is inevitable. You can help by making a donation on the form on the last page.

Each time I travel to Klibur Domin, I come away inspired by the excellent work being done by Joaquim and his staff and the impressive results being achieved. My 2012 visit was no exception.

RYDER-CHESHIRE

LIFE'S WORK OF TWO GREAT HUMANITARIANS

THE NAME COMBINES THE NAMES OF TWO OF THE GREATEST HUMANITARIANS OF THIS OR ANY OTHER AGE, TWO PEOPLE WHO BEAT DAUNTING ODDS TO BRING AS MUCH ASSISTANCE AND RELIEF AS POSSIBLE TO THOSE IN NEED.

The under-privileged, the chronically ill, the mentally and physically handicapped, the hungry and the needy, regardless of country of creed, were their focus and concern. **Sue Ryder and Leonard Cheshire**, both English born, met in 1954 and they married in 1959, but had each from 1948 onwards begun to found houses to care for unfortunates who were without care.

Sue Ryder, found her own wartime role was the critical catalyst for her life's work. She saw the extent of oppression in Eastern Europe and cared for the homeless and ailing survivors of Nazi concentration camps, later directing her energies to Ethiopia, the lepers in Northern India and disabled in Russia, Japan and China. **Leonard Cheshire**, following University, found himself in the RAF in early 1939 and served an outstanding wartime career. His courage skill and leadership were legendary and he ended the war as the RAF's most decorated airman. Following his war service, he returned to his home in England but a request from a hospital near his home was the watershed, when he took in a dying man who had no-one to care for him. **This experience was the start of it all and his home "Le Court" became the first Cheshire home.**

Sue and Leonard formed a partnership in 1958 with the establishment of "Ryder-Cheshire Mission for the Relief of Suffering". It was run from Raphael in India which even to this day is funded from Australia and New Zealand. Hospitals and homes were set up across the world and hundreds of thousands of people have been beneficiaries.

The couple drew strength from their belief in God and from the teachings of the Catholic Church to which both were converts.

The work of these two wonderful people continues to this day. Ryder Cheshire Australia is committed to the work of its founders at Raphael in India and Klibur Domin in East Timor and in our Australian Homes at Ivanhoe (Melbourne), Mount Gambier and Singleton.

Faced with devastation, dedication to Ryder Cheshire continues

By Carolyn Tapley,
Ryder Cheshire Foundation,
Canterbury, New Zealand

On the 4 September 2010 a 7.1 earthquake caused significant damage to Canterbury and Christchurch and on the 22 February 2011 a further 6.3 earthquake hit Christchurch, killing 185 people in one of the nation's deadliest peacetime disasters.

"When this earthquake hit I was in my office on the 2nd floor and I remember watching my Raphael Golden Jubilee plaque leave the top of my filing cabinet. It flew through my window like a missile.

We eventually got out of the building, and witnessed scenes like a scary movie. Thick fog clogged our airways; we struggled to see anything in front of us. Eventually we realised it was dust and smoke from collapsed and burning buildings.

There were no screams nor words spoken - just soft groans, as people gathered in the park across the road. The park was soon to become a temporary morgue.

Standing in Latimer Square was like standing on a boat in a rough sea. We heard the earthquakes coming and for a moment thought we were at the seaside ready to jump the waves as they rolled into the beach. But it wasn't the waves of the ocean that were coming towards us - but the land. It was as though an enormous monster was under a blanket of grass moving towards us. We all looked at each other as if to say 'are you seeing what I am seeing' - and we held hands like children and all jumped and moved over the waves as they came towards us.

For several days we were without power, water, sewerage, landline and limited mobile coverage. No television meant we had no real idea of the devastation. For the first week I stayed with friends, sleeping in the living room with their petrified children, two dogs and a parrot. The tropical fish had not survived. We ate the food that was thawing in the freezer, and got water from the swimming pool that we boiled and camouflaged with strong coffee. That first night, we felt severe shakes every 10 minutes.

In two weeks I attended nine funerals of friends and colleagues. One friend lost her life, shopping in the Cashel Street Mall. A work colleague had his legs amputated - he was trapped by concrete girders when his office collapsed. An Australian doctor had been attending a medical conference in Christchurch - he performed the surgery by torch light, using basic tools from an army medical kit.

Just across the road from my office, the

six-storey Canterbury Television Building collapsed and caught fire, taking more than half of the 185 lives lost. The government declared a state of national emergency, and rebuilding alone will cost up to \$NZ30 billion. Numerous aftershocks followed that shocking day, on February 22, 2011. During this period, there were times I really struggled mentally to get through. It was during these moments that I continually reminded myself of the real reason I fundraise for the Ryder Cheshire Foundation.



Carolyn with one of the residents whilst on a visit to Raphael

When I first arrived at Raphael I was scared of some of the disabilities and deformities I saw. I can remember the first time I was taken to the Leper Colony. I had a staff member from Raphael showing me around and introducing me to the residents and also interpreting for me. I can remember being introduced to a woman who had severe deformities from leprosy and her hands had also been eaten away by the gangrene.

I remember to my horror she came up to me and tried to hug me. She spoke to the interpreter and I asked what she had said. The interpreter was cautious. "Do you really want to know what she said?" I replied, "yes" - the response: "She said mam - your tummy is fat." I was aghast! I replied, "Well tell her, her arms are too short!" The interpreter spoke to the woman and at that moment we all burst into laughter. For me the spell was broken and I walked out of my world and into hers.

To this day I am in awe of these beautiful people, for they have that something special where their eyes sparkle like jewels, something I don't see too often in the western world. Because of this I am totally com-

mitted to the longevity of the Ryder Cheshire Foundation.

I cannot say that recently it has been easy fundraising in Canterbury. Yet we in Canterbury fly the flag for the rest of New Zealand.

Many of our buildings, hotels, restaurants and event centres have been lost, and the usual fundraising events are no longer possible. So we have had to be innovative and think outside the box. "

This is selected from the moving speech Carolyn delivered at the Biennial Conference of Ryder Cheshire Australia held in Canberra in May this year, 15 months after the devastating earthquake hit Christchurch.

Happiness humbles at Raphael

Hobart-based occupational therapist Georgia Herron had been travelling through Indonesia and Nepal before she arrived at Raphael - and discovered a heart-warming happiness.

"Ever since I was 12, I've not only wanted to travel to India, but immerse myself in Indian culture," she said. She found her way there via a colleague, Carmen, who had volunteered at Raphael 15 years ago.

Occupational therapists aim to promote functioning and independence through activity or occupation, and Georgia quickly found she had a lot to offer the children of Ava Vihar, the home for people with intellectual and physical disabilities. "I focused on engaging children through play, promoting handwriting through improving upper limb functioning, and establishing a 'sensory room', she said. This room had to be usable for all the teachers and students at Raphael, with facilities and activities to identify common signs exhibited by children with sensory processing difficulties.

Georgia also assisted with training some of Raphael's teachers. "I was guided by the staff at Raphael on the areas they wanted more information about, and the areas they saw as most needed for the children," she said. "They were all so enthusiastic to learn and do as much for the children as possible."

Even as the children at Raphael struggled to develop their skills, Georgia says they remained cheerful - and the happiness pervaded the whole country. "Not once did I hear any one complain, bicker or think of themselves as less fortunate," she said. "Every one is so grateful for what they have. This was a very humbling experience."

"BARBARA Committed to Giving"

by Patrick Lewis

Patrick has finally achieved his dream of writing the life story of his late deeply loved wife, Barbara Anne Lewis, who sadly passed away in January 2009. As he writes on the back cover of the book -

" This is the story of Barbara, a passionate young Australian woman who, following the untimely death of her mother and father, accepted the challenge offered her in 1960 by Leonard Cheshire, VC OM, to work among the newly opened Cheshire Homes for the sick and suffering in India. As her life unfolds in this land with its diverse rich cultures, she finds personal fulfilment and romance despite the constant demands of her volunteer commitment."

This book is a must read for all who knew and were inspired by Barbara and for all those wanting to read a fascinating story of a remarkable woman.

Book Launches will be held in Melbourne in December and in Sydney early in the New Year, with details to be circulated separately.

**Books may also be purchased by contacting
Peter Newton on 03 9894 3191 (for those in Victoria, SA, WA and Tasmania)
or Christine Hannan on 02 9416 7569
(for those in NSW, Queensland, ACT and NT).**



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RYDER-CHESHIRE CHRISTMAS CARDS AVAILABLE NOW

Ryder-Cheshire offers a wide of Christmas cards and their sale contributes enormously to Fundraising. Cards are available by mail from the Victorian and NSW Foundations. Go to www.ryder-cheshire.org to view the range available.

MAY WE SEND YOUR NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL ?

To help reduce printing and postage costs we can 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
and include your name and postal address.

Thank you for your support.

This Newsletter is edited and produced by Evelyn Petters in West Australia
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Newsletters are issued in May and November each year and the next issue will be published in early May 2013

Contributors should submit articles and photos by e-mail to

**Evelyn Petters (petters@iinet.net.au)
by 1 April 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. Our Newsletter contains contact details in each state. Simply give our respective state volunteer a call. They would 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.

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

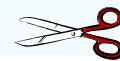
You can sponsor any of the following three programs:

- **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