



'RAPHAEL'

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF
THE RYDER-CHESHIRE FOUNDATIONS OF AUSTRALIA
MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS OF THE AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR OVERSEAS AID.

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ROHIT IS NOW NAVEEN

Much discussion has ensued here, in recent years, about the increasing number of Asian children being adopted and brought to Australia. Those against such a programme argue either from a racist viewpoint, or speak in terms of doom about frustrating the child and imponderable difficulties. Clearly the first group of people are not to be gainsayed by any rational arguments. As for the second group of opinions, perhaps they are exaggerating the difficulties. Often "forseeable problems" never eventuate. On the other hand when one considers the deprived, loveless circumstances from which these children often come, the case takes on a different hue.

These little adoptees, added to the burden of living in an impoverished country, such as Cambodia or Vietnam, are frequently from overcrowded institutions. Individual love and attention is too taxing for the staff, no matter how good-hearted they may be. Here, then, you have the opportunity for such children to be plucked from a maternally-deprived situation and transferred to the loving warmth of a family in Australia. Problems there will be, of course. Why, though, should a child be denied the right to escape the discriminations and vicissitudes which await them in their own country, if an optimistic alternative is available? Take Rohit for example, a little Indian boy.

Rohit was only a fortnight old when his mother, Chilli, died. That was in early 1969. Chilli, and her husband, Darum Das, were badly disfigured with leprosy, he having lost most of his fingers on both hands due to the disease. Fortunately, rather than living in slum-dwellings on the outskirts of Dehra Dun with other lepers and scrounging a living by begging, they had gained admission to the Nali Pani Leprosy Colony. This is situated a couple of miles farther up the riverbed from "Raphael".

At Nali Pani, Chilli and Darum Das were cared for, together with eighty fellow-sufferers. As at the "Raphael" Leprosy Colony the patients live in family-unit cottages, and work according to their capabilities.

There is gardening, the buying/dividing of rations, and the dyeing and weaving for which Nali Pani is justifiably renowned. News of Chilli's deteriorating health came to "Raphael" by a messenger sent by the Colony Supervisor. Immediately the van was sent to collect her, and soon, she was admitted to a bed in the Tuberculosis Ward. The disease was far advanced. Too ill for anything except nursing care she died two days later. Another message arrived: Would Chilli's baby, Rohit, be taken into the Little White House. Certainly.

At that time, and for the next two years, the Supervisor of that Unit was an Australian volunteer named Pamela Holt. Born in Adelaide, Pamela had been trained in Child-Care in England, before coming to India. Together with an Indian House Mother and Father she looked after sixty children in the Little White House at "Raphael". The majority of these children have parents who are afflicted with leprosy, so they receive doses of the wonder-drug known as D.D.S., and are medically examined twice a year. Rohit began his preventative treatment against leprosy when he was three months old.

Being the baby in the household, Rohit was pampered and admired by all the children. Clearly, also, Pamela grew excessively fond of the child. His progress from baby babbling to walking on his spindly legs were noted with joy, and the anxieties of childhood illnesses worried over. Pamela made detailed enquiries about the possibility of adopting Rohit. Again and again back came the reply: single women were not permitted to adopt.

Then, in mid-1971 Pamela left "Raphael" and went with an Indian friend, Pratap Chandra, to work for the East Pakistan refugees who were flooding into Bengal. Later, on their return to Delhi, Pratap and Pamela announced their engagement. They married in March 1972, since when they have had two baby girls.

Pamela, now with her husband's co-operation, indefatigably went ahead with arrangements for having Rohit legally adopted. Both Pratap and Pamela wanted him as a permanent member of their family, instead of just a holiday guest. Rohit's good-natured playfulness and constant Hindi chatter had captivated them both. Last December all the necessary permissions from the Indian Government were granted.

An excited Chandra family drove 250 miles north from Delhi to Dehra Dun. It was a poignant time for many reasons. During a special Hindu ceremony Rohit's father, Darum Das - now nearly blind and very feeble - handed his son into their permanent care. Rohit was renamed Naveen. (This is a Sanscrit word meaning "New"). Afterwards there were garlands of flowers presented, and afternoon tea shared with the children and staff at "Raphael".

Passport formalities and farewells occupied the next few weeks. Late in January Pamela, Pratap and the three children migrated to Australia. Now they reside in Adelaide on the brink of a new life full of promise and opportunities not available to most in present-day India. Naveen, nee Rohit, has already begun Kindergarten.

"Raphael", the Ryder-Cheshire International Centre, at Dehra Dun in Northern India, was founded by Group Captain Leonard Cheshire V.C. and his wife Sue Ryder, as part of their world wide work for the Relief of Suffering. It is unique in that it is larger than any other of their Homes and it cares for a diversity of people in need - amongst the 300 residents there are Leprosy patients, mentally retarded children, destitute children, chronic sick and there is also a mobile Tuberculosis Clinic. Another unique aspect is that it is supported solely by Australia and New Zealand.

Since its establishment in 1959 the Founders have always endeavoured to have Australia and New Zealand represented amongst the staff at "Raphael". At present there are vacancies in the professional volunteer field for:

- 1) Secretary
- 2) Occupational Therapist and/or Physio Therapist
- 3) Nurse with experience of Tuberculosis nursing

Volunteers sign on for 2 years, and fares are paid both ways - board and keep provided, and \$5 pocket money is paid, plus one month's holiday per year.

Further details may be obtained from :-

Australian Liaison Officer,
Ryder-Cheshire Foundations,
587 Toorak Road,
TOORAK. 3142. Tel: 24.7682

VICTORIAN FOUNDATION

The President, Dame Mary Daly, the executive and members of the Ryder Cheshire-Foundation feel very honoured that Sir John McEwen P.C., G.C.M.G., C.H., has agreed to become a patron of the Foundation in Victoria.

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Kilmore Support Group

The following office bearers were elected at the inaugural meeting in December :-

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| President | Rev. E.A. Cooper |
| Vice-President | Mgr. K. Morrison |
| Secretary/Treasurer | Mr. Brian Fitzgerald |
| Committee | Mrs. Brian Fitzgerald, Messrs. Jim Chapman, Kevin Williams, Mesdames, Elaine Wright and Lena Hempenstall. |

We will hold three general meetings annually, on 3rd. Tuesday in February, June and October.

Following the Cheshire visit, we were able to send \$1000.00 to the Victorian Foundation, and at its first meeting in February, the Support Group voted to take on responsibility for the \$450.00 required for the items listed in the 1974 Special Projects Supplementary List. We have sent \$200.00 towards this end.

Kilmore was greatly honoured by the visit of the Group Captain and we hope that the result of his personal meeting with so many people may be evident in quiet and enduring support. As one member of our new group explained it "This is really a personal commitment".

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Through the enthusiasm of Mrs. Mary Walta, until recently an active member of Ballarat Support Group, now living in Geelong, and Mr. Howard Burrowes, a supporter of Ryder-Cheshire, the Geelong Rotary Club have organized a Mannequin Parade in conjunction with the Australian Wool Board on Tuesday April 15th at Geelong City Hall. The Ryder-Cheshire Association is to be included amongst the recipients of the proceeds. The following week, Geelong Rotary Club have arranged a public meeting to launch a Ryder-Cheshire Support Group in Geelong. For further information, please contact

Mrs. Mary Walta
Phone Geelong 99350

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Ballarat Support Group

At our first meeting for the year, we co-opted and welcomed Miss Sue Jones to our committee, and regretfully accepted the resignation of Mr. Stuart Crawford.

As we are exploring possible avenues in which we could assist the physically handicapped people of Ballarat, we were very interested in the talk given by our Guest Speaker, Mr. Max Burnett, Chairman of the Ballarat Committee for Services for the Handicapped.

Our Charity Theatre Night has been transferred to September 19th, the opening night of "Move over Mrs. Markman" which promises to be a sell-out.

Rev. Ray Moore, Chairman of the Rotary International Committee of the Ballarat Rotary Club, has expressed interest in the launching of the Covenant Scheme for us. We will have a final decision after their changeover in June. What marvellous publicity!

Mrs. Margaret Burke of Buninyong reported a successful bottle drive. Wool has been purchased and the ladies, having just collected eleven boxes of clothing and linen for "Raphael" are now busily knitting goods for the next consignment. We send our deepest gratitude to these wonderful ladies. Our clothing officer, Mrs. Aileen White, phone 32-2240 will be pleased to hear from donors of good quality used clothing, especially woollens. As well as the depot at St. Vincent de Paul, your gift may be left at "The Shirt Arcade", 7 Sturt Street, Ballarat, marked for Ryder-Cheshire.

Several requests for guest speakers have been made, the latest being the Young Liberals when Mr. John Hurley will speak, while Mrs. Val Sarah will speak at a Beaufort Apex dinner.

Projects are still being requested, the latest being twenty bed spreads for the "Little White House" accepted by the girls of Sacred Heart College who also have an adoption. The "thank you" letters that arrive so promptly from "Raphael" are greatly appreciated by the donors, and keep that personal link, so important in our work.

Mrs. Mary Walta, with the help of some friends, is working hard to establish a Support Group in Geelong. Recently she received money raised by a small group of ladies who know Sue Ryder personally. These wonderful people intend organizing further small functions for "Raphael". Best wishes Mary for further success!

Our President will be overseas shortly and intends visiting two Cheshire Homes, "The Grove", Norwich, England and "Carcavelos" Algarve, Portugal. We will be looking forward to hearing her impressions.

Cath McLenehan Hon. Secretary, 112 Webster St., Ballarat. Ph. 326483

FOR ADOPTION

MALIK SINGH

Who is a leper ... he is 15 years old. He came to Raphael in 1973 and is Hindu.

At the age of 12, Malik developed abscesses on his elbows and sores on his face and ears. He was treated at the civil Hospital for one year and on his admission to Raphael he still had sores all over his face. After 4 months the improvement was astounding and now all the sores have completely gone.

Malik was brought up in a village by his parents together with 2 sisters and a brother. His father had Leprosy and died. Malik went to school until he was diagnosed, then of course he was refused admittance. He is staying in the Unit at Raphael with Sebraj Singh, who is very good to him and he is happy there. He works in the weaving unit and in his spare time he is learning carpentry which is his first love. He likes to play but is not allowed to play with the children from the Little White House, so his company is only adults and the very young children. He does, however, attend films put on by the Military.

ADOPTIONS SECRETARY:

Miss Anne Wright-Smith,
162 Kooyong Road,
CAULFIELD. Ph. 534283

W.A. FOUNDATION

Nearly 200 guests attended a successful evening function at the home of Mrs. Helen Connaughton at the end of February. We are most grateful to Mrs. Connaughton for making her delightful garden available for the evening and to Mrs. Kath French and her helpers for organizing the party so well. We were only sorry that Doctor Connaughton was detained in the Eastern States and could not get back to Perth in time for the function.

We are also pleased to welcome Mrs. Newbold back to Perth. Mrs. Newbold's experience of Thrift Shops in Britain will be greatly appreciated by Mrs. Jean Black and her willing team at our Thrift Shop in Perth.

Our future programme includes the A.G.M. at the end of March and some social functions when the weather gets cooler. Details of the winter programme will be announced shortly.

Mrs. P. Cribb
Secretary

A.C.T. FOUNDATION

The Canberra Retail Market Trust advise that the Foundation will be allocated at Charity Stall in the Fyshwick Market on 3 days, Friday 30th May, Saturday 23rd August, and Sunday 16th November. It would be appreciated if members contribute donations of cakes, biscuits, jams sweets and unwanted bric-a-brac for the stalls.

Mrs. Margaret Murray has kindly consented to be Honorary Secretary until our Annual General Meeting is held early in April.

Mrs. S. Bashford
Publicity Officer Phone 956379 (Home) 733222 (Work)

N.S.W. FOUNDATION

The Annual General Meeting is to be held at the Anti T.B. Association in Crown Street, Sydney, on Monday, 28th April and all members are invited to be present.

Sydney Support Group

The last event for 1974 was a Wine Tasting evening at the Kassells Cellars in Tempe and about forty members and friends had a very enjoyable time.

On December 5th, our Clothing Officer, Miss Monica Bethel married Mr. Frank Leys. We wish them both every happiness.

A barbeque at the home of Miss Cheryl Nesbitt began the activities for 1975 and will be followed by our annual sausage selling stall at the Rocks Festival in Argyle Place, on Saturday, 12th April. On Wednesday, 16th April, we are hoping to repeat our success at Kassells with another wine tasting. A pleasant fork-style meal is served and the charge will be \$5 each.

A new venture for which we would like assistance will be the stocking and manning of a stall in the new Chatswood Market, a large, former department store converted into open plan stalls. Here we will try to sell anything we are given, from white elephants to home cooking. The space will be available to us, free of charge, from Wednesday 25th June to Saturday 28th, so we are appealing for gifts to sell and anyone with an hour or so to spare who could help with the serving.

For information about this or the wine tasting, please contact Mrs. Jenny Gale, 909.2996 or Mrs. Joyce Ratcliffe 42.1708.

Port Macquarie and District Support Group

The newly formed Support Group arranged a very successful International Dinner, making a profit of \$300.00. Later, they arranged a Giant Hamper for Christmas, the proceeds to go to "Raphael".

Two of our members, eager to adopt a patient at "Raphael", are happy to be able to help in this way. Members travelled to Sydney for the dinner at Macquarie University and were delighted to meet the Founders.

Other functions are contemplated for the future.

S.A. FOUNDATION

Our founder, Sue and Leonard Cheshire, had a most successful visit to Adelaide last October.

The Rotary Club of Henley Beach arranged an evening at which the Group-Captain spoke and the film "Share Thy Bread" was shown. Members of the Henley Rotaract Club were also present, both these clubs have adoptions. A cheque for \$57.80 has been received as a result of this function. Many thanks to John Beagley for arranging the evening and President, Geoff Rippin. Leonard spoke at the Adelaide Girls High School and was presented with a cheque for \$150.00 for an Education Endowment.

The weather was glorious for the barbeque arranged by the Clare Support Group and held at the Sevenhill Monastery, as always an outstanding day, highlighted on this occasion by the presence of our Founders. Many thanks to Dr. John Wallace the President, his committee and members for a most enjoyable day; the large sum of \$700.00 was raised, which in itself tells the success story.

Leonard Cheshire spoke at Sacred Heart College and a cheque for \$400.00 was subsequently received, a grand effort from the boys as a result of a Walkathon. Thanks to Brother Columbarus and Brother Walter.

Miss Ryder spoke at the Loreto Convent and received a cheque for \$100.00 towards their adoption which has been going on for five years, a wonderful effort. On another occasion, Miss Ryder spoke at Pembroke School and St. Agnatiuous, Athelstone, when \$25.00 was donated. A special evening was arranged with the Marion Lions Club by Bill Beerworth from our committee, at which Miss Ryder spoke, an interesting and significant meeting as a cheque was presented for \$150.00 our first donation towards the next major project at "Raphael", the sinking of a Tube Well. Our thanks to President Rex. Glennon and his committee.

We have now raised nearly \$2000.00 towards this most important project of giving "Raphael" a permanent supply of water. I understand, that, with contributions from other States, about \$8000.00 has already been raised, and I commend this project to everyone. It is a project that will be of immense value in helping to run "Raphael" more efficiently.

Our thanks go to all Clubs and Schools, and the media for their reception of Sue and Leonard Cheshire while they were in Adelaide. Special thanks to our Treasurer Frank Goldney for arranging interviews.

Ross M. Stanford
Hon. Secretary

Newsletter

Deadline for the next issue of "Raphael" ::::: 15th July

Please send all copy to :-

Miss Gwen Easton,
19, 36 Kensington Road,
South Yarra. 3141.

*Interview
- permanent water
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THE AUSTRALIAN FOUNDATIONS

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Ph. 9091705
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S.A.

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President: Mr. P. McMahon, 12 Clarkson St., Pearce. 2607
Adoptions Secretary: Mrs. M. Brennan,
Pub. Officer: Mrs. S. Bashford, 43 Carstenz St., Griffith. 2603
Ph. 956379

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Secretary of
Steering Committee: Mr. J. Dacey, 58 Granadilla St., McGregor. 4109
(Foundation in the process of being formed)

VICTORIA

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Ph. 534283
Adoptions Secretary: Mrs. W.M. Calanchini, 23 Douglas St., Toorak. 3142
Ph. 241975
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