



'RAPHAEL'

NEWSLETTER OF

THE RYDER-CHESHIRE FOUNDATION (VICTORIA)

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IN THIS ISSUE OF 'RAPHAEL'.

In this issue we complete the reprinting of the talk by Mr. John Martyn, O. B. E., which we started in the last issue. We also have an article by Miss Anne Young, reprinted from the Newsletter of 'Indianaid'. By happy coincidence, Anne is now in Melbourne and will be speaking at a meeting on Thursday, 7th December, and details of this meeting are also featured in this issue.

THIRTY YEARS IN INDIA.

(During his visit to Victoria earlier this year, Mr. John Martyn spoke on the above theme on several occasions. When he spoke to the Collingwood Rotary Club his talk was recorded, and a condensed version of the concluding part of his talk appears below. The first part was included in the previous issue of this newsletter).

I feel that I want to try and do all I can for the Indian people, although I realise that one man cannot do very much. Any contribution, however, is well worth making.

It was apparently by some kind of accident that I've been associated with Group-Captain Cheshire, who came to Dehra Dun in 1956 to open a Home for people who were incurably sick. He has been doing this since 1948. (During the war he was England's greatest bomber pilot, the most highly-decorated man of any in the Allied Services, as far as I know.) There are now 40 such Homes in England, 93 in the world, and they are in 20 countries altogether. He came to Dehra Dun, where I lived, to start one of these Homes in 1956 because an Indian Princess had given him an empty house there, and I became the first Chairman of the Committee of that home. It wasn't work that I had ever expected that I'd be associated with before, and after a time I handed over to an Indian General, a doctor General, who had retired in Dehra Dun and who, I thought, would be more suitable for this sort of work.

But I didn't get out of Cheshire's clutches - I don't think he lets people out of his clutches very easily - In fact, I soon found that I was a Trustee of all the 15 Homes in India. Then I became Managing Trustee. From time to time, I have to tour around and see how the various Cheshire Homes in India are getting on. Every Cheshire Home is supported by the town where it's situated; it has a Committee which runs its affairs, and each is an autonomous body.

In 1959, Group-Captain Cheshire married Sue Ryder, who since 1946 had been working among the people discharged from the concentration camps in Europe. Thousands of these people came out very broken in health and she devoted herself to trying to look after them. She motored thousands of miles everywhere in Europe, and started hospitals in various countries, 18 of them behind the Iron Curtain in Poland. I think she's the only person from Western Europe who can go behind the Iron Curtain and move freely around. Well, Group-Captain Cheshire and Sue Ryder were married in 1959, and then they decided they wanted to start a sort of headquarters for their work and selected Dehra Dun, this town where I'd been living. Their headquarters is known as 'Raphael' and because the Group-Captain hopes that Cheshire Homes will expand and be supported by people in India, he promised the people of Dehra Dun not to appeal in Dehra Dun for support for 'Raphael'. Therefore, that support comes from other countries.

For six months of the year support comes from England, and for five months from Australia. The reason why it comes from Australia is that most of the nurses at 'Raphael' have come from Australia. They've been remarkably fine people. I've been very impressed by them and because of this, I've long wanted to visit Australia.

Patients at 'Raphael', briefly, consist of 120 people suffering from leprosy who are very deformed because the disease has got a bad grip on them - mostly they've lost a good part of their hands or feet - also about 80 mentally deficient children, for whom there's no suitable provision in India and who would otherwise be a burden on their parents at home; 40 destitute children who are mainly the children of lepers to whom we want to give a reasonable start in life. Recently Cheshire's been given money by people in England and Germany for two hospital buildings and they are being gradually equipped.

There are Support Groups for this Home in Sydney, in Canberra, in Cooma and in Melbourne and other parts of Victoria. I have been very encouraged in my visit to Australia to find such a large number of people interested, in fact, enthusiastic, about this work. When I go back to Dehra Dun, I'll be able to take very encouraging reports back with me. 'Raphael' has been a very real part of my thirty years in India, and I hope it will be a real part for the rest of my time, the rest of my life, I hope, where-ever that may be.

ANNE YOUNG.

The name of Anne Young is well known to all who have sponsored children or patients at the International Centre, as she has been at 'Raphael' for two and a half years, prior to her recent return to Australia. During this time, she handled correspondence on adoptions and endowments, in addition to her onerous duties as a trained nurse.

She will address a meeting at the Kew City Hall on Thursday, 7th December at 8.00 p.m. The meeting will include a film and colour slides on the International Centre. A light supper will be served at the conclusion of the meeting. Tickets are available from the following :-

Mr. W. Galbraith	86 9513
Mr J. Graham	81 4007
Mrs. J. McCoy	80 5180
Mrs. B. Hamilton	848 1030

Admission charges are \$1.00 for adults and 25c for children. Proceeds will be used in furthering the work of the Ryder-Cheshire Foundation at Dehra Dun.

The following account of 'Raphael' was written by Anne Young for the Newsletter of 'Indianaid', and we are grateful to that organisation for allowing us to re-print it.

For the past two and a half years, I have been working at 'Raphael' which is 150 miles north of Delhi in northern India. There are about 36 acres of land, beautifully situated near the foothills of the Himalayas, and separated from the town of Dehra Dun by the Rispana River, which only flows during the monsoons. On this land, Group-Captain Leonard Cheshire and his wife, Sue Ryder-Cheshire, founded 'Raphael' (named after the Archangel, Patron of Healing) in March, 1959.

At that time, there were six leprosy patients and nine mentally defective children. . . . housed in tents! Now it has grown to an 'oasis' for 260 incurable and destitute people, comprising:

A LEPROSY COLONY where 120 patients live as a village community, and are given shelter, clothing, food and medical care. There is a dispensary where a Compounder dispenses Sulphone drugs which control the disease, and other medicines. Two of the patients work as Dressers under the able supervision of Mrs. Betty Beckett, an English Volunteer.

The colony is for 'burnt-out' cases, but many are badly deformed; those

who are able to work, do what they can.

There is a weaving and spinning section, where material for bandages and clothing is woven. Amongst the patients, there are two tailors, a carpenter, a shoe-maker, a barber, and the Headman who keeps the Colony books and acts as a spokesman. Another patient supervises the poultry farm which provides eggs for the whole Centre, while others are employed in the fruit and vegetable garden and as messengers.

THE MENTAL UNIT which consists of three buildings: the boys' home, the girls' home, and the school building. There are 80 mentally defective children, some of whom are also physically handicapped, and while there is seemingly very little that can be done for these unfortunate children, apart from ensuring they are comfortable and content, they are very happy. As one gets to know their individual - though sometimes strange - personalities, they become more and more appealing and so worthy of being happy and well cared for.

They are either destitute - many having been literally picked up off the streets - or from extremely poor homes, where the whole family might be confined to one room, or there is just not enough food to feed all the mouths and with a child who is mentally ill, life becomes almost impossible for the rest of the family.

Mary Vaughan, a physiotherapist from Victoria, has taken a keen interest in these children and has worked very constructively amongst them. (She also gives physiotherapy to the hospital patients.) The Indian staff - ayas, orderlies, etc. - work under the supervision of Mother Angela, and they are doing a wonderful job under obviously difficult conditions. Mother Angela heads a group of five Indian Sisters who offered to help the Cheshires in their work; four of them work with the mental children and one with the destitute children. One of them teaches in the little school for the Mental Children where those who are able to be taught are given simple lessons and exercises. Some learn knitting and sewing and drawing, and others just sit and listen to the music (I might add that some impressionist dancing often accompanies the music!), or sing songs, (tunes from 'My Fair Lady' were very popular when I was there) and it is difficult to pass the Mental Unit without being coaxed into joining the chorus!! They also love bright colours, pretty pictures, and the feel of soft, silky or furry things.

THE HOME FOR DESTITUTE CHILDREN was named 'The Little White House' by Mrs Cheshire (after a Polish folk song), and here there are 40 destitute children - the Home is now being extended to accommodate more. These are normal, healthy, delightful children, but they either have no parents at all, or

their parents are suffering from leprosy and are neither physically nor financially capable of caring for them.

In 'The Little White House' they are given shelter, food, clothing and schooling - and a chance in life that would be otherwise impossible for them.

They are very happy and, of course, very appealing, and one is always welcomed with a jubilant cry of 'Hello Aunty!' Before I left 'Raphael' I was given a wonderful concert, the memory of which I shall always treasure.

THE HOSPITAL FOR THE CHRONIC SICK consists of two buildings - one was built with money received from OXFAM (The Oxford Committee for Famine Relief, in England) and the other was donated by MISEREOR (of Germany). The Misereor building has only just been completed and has not been opened yet, while the Oxfam building has accommodation for 40 patients. An Indian staff is being trained and supervised by nurses who have volunteered from Australia and New Zealand.

This was where I spent most of my time, and now Miss Joan Usher (who was Matron of Cooma Hospital) has been appointed Matron-Administrator; her responsibilities extend to every section of 'Raphael'.

Until August, 1966, a very dedicated Indian woman, Mrs. Ava Dhar, was the Secretary-Administrator. She was a wonderful person and had been with 'Raphael' almost from the beginning, since which time she had survived many periods of hardship. Unfortunately, she developed cancer and died in February of this year. She is sadly missed.

Most of the maintenance money for 'Raphael' comes from Australia and New Zealand. There are Committees in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra, with Support Groups in Cooma, Lithgow, Ballarat, Coleraine, Gippsland and Pentridge. Support is now also coming from Australia through Indianaid, which has sponsored various projects of equipment and helped with Volunteers.

For me, my time at 'Raphael', and in India, has been wonderful and an enriching experience. India is a vast and varied country with extremes in climatic conditions and standards of living. With a relatively small proportion of the world's land surface, and an incredibly large proportion of the world's population, the problems of life are inevitably great, with no easy solution. The poverty which afflicts the majority of the Indian people comes as a shock to one used to the comfort and security of Australia.

To try to 'move mountains' or to completely revolutionise conditions in

India generally would be impossible and very frustrating, but it is tremendously rewarding to be helping to make a better life for a few individuals, and to see people fed and clothed - knowing that so much of this has been made possible by the support being received from Australia and New Zealand.

ADVERTISEMENTS WANTED.

The printing and postage of our Newsletter is a costly business, but we are anxious to continue it to enable us to maintain contact with our friends and benefactors. A way in which our costs could be reduced would be by means of paid advertisements included in the Newsletter, and the Hon. Secretary of the Foundation would like to hear from any person or organisation interested in placing such an advertisement. Circulation of the Newsletter approaches 1,500 mainly in the Melbourne area, but copies are also circulated in four country areas.

TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS

This issue will be the last sent to people who have not made a donation, subscription or adoption or endowment payment to us since the beginning of our last financial year, 1st June, 1966. We regret the need to do this, but we intend to register the Newsletter with the P. M. G. 's Department for postage as a periodical and must restrict circulation to Members of the Foundation to enable this to be done.

THE RYDER-CHESHIRE FOUNDATION (VICTORIA)

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