

# ' RAPHAEL '

NEWSLETTER OF

## THE RYDER-CHESHIRE FOUNDATION

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' RAPHAEL ' by Bill Galbraith.

### NEWS FROM ' RAPHAEL ' :

During 1968 I was very fortunate in being able to make a round-world trip and in particular, to spend two and a half months in Dehra Dun, the home of ' Raphael '.

I left Melbourne on 27 December 1967, and flew to Delhi via Hong Kong, Saigon, Bangkok and Calcutta. My itinerary was arranged in such a way as to avoid the hot season whilst travelling through Asia. Initially I spent little time in Delhi and made straight for the pick-up point for a taxi to Dehra Dun - journey of about 130 miles. I waited for about an hour whilst the driver solicited another four passengers and during that time pondered on the chances of the vehicle making the distance. It looked very old and battered, the tyres were " unroadworthy " and the horn was operated by placing a bare wire against the metal of the steering column. In most Asian countries the horn is the most important accoutrement a car can possess.

The taxi crawled away in a very disquieting manner, but gathered momentum as time and miles went by, and confidence was regained. Aside from one blow-out, we made it to ' Raphael ', a little after dark. I was greeted there by Dorothy Huggard from Ireland, Betty Beckett from England, Shona Sutherland from New Zealand, Phillippa Mansfield, Pamela Holt from South Australia and by Matron Joan Usher. This was the " team " running ' Raphael ' at the time of my arrival in mid-January 1968. I enjoyed meeting this wonderful and devoted group of people who each has given two years of her life to help the three hundred patients. Shortly after my arrival, I was also to meet Marie Maguire a physiotherapist from Queensland, who came to work in the leper colony with Mrs. Betty Beckett.

I stayed for two weeks at ' Raphael ', and as I liked Dehra Dun so much, I then obtained a position teaching at a boys' school a couple of miles away. So all told, I spent two and a half months in Dehra Dun, and was able to assess the work of the Cheshire organisation which previously I had tried to promote from " down under ".

As is well known now, ' Raphael ' consists of a member of sections.

A hospital caring for the incurably sick, for patients needing temporary help and for T.B. patients, a ward for whom has been opened since I left. Dorothy Huggard and Shona Sutherland worked very hard here looking after difficult cases, many of whom are spastic. They are helped by Indian nursing staff.

A leper colony. There are about 45 lepers and many of them are married couples. Mrs. Betty Beckett and Marie Maguire are their devoted helpers, and they are endeavouring to make their patients as self reliant as possible. They are taught weaving, they cook their own meals, care for the cleanliness of their small homes, and, under the inspiration of Mrs. Beckett, have now begun to grow vegetables for themselves. Of course, the lepers have to be taught to care for their own limbs. Burns and cuts can be very dangerous as they lose all feeling in their fingers and toes, and hence do damage to themselves. Every morning they receive attention in the dispensary.

A home for destitute children which Mrs. Cheshire calls "The Little White House". The children here are quite normal but many of them have parents in the leper colony, and it is necessary to separate them as continual contact could eventually cause them to become infected too. Other children have been found hungry on the streets, or for one reason or another, have no parents to care for them. Pamela Holt cares for the children and this is an exacting and demanding task. Young boys and girls with no parents to care for them, require a great deal of love and attention. Not only does Pamela give this, but she also runs regular classes every day, a task at which she is very skilled.

Family ties in India are very strong and Group Captain and Mrs. Cheshire are very much aware of the problem that will face these children when they have to be absorbed into society without the comfort of parental guidance. Since I left India a delightful Indian couple have moved into the "Little White House" and are helping Pamela with the children. Also the older boys are learning basic skills such as carpentry and shoe making at local schools.

Many of the children are adopted by Australians and this gives a further sense of being cared for, besides providing for their physical well being. Phillippa Mansfield did wonderful work not only as Secretary of 'Raphael', but also in corresponding with the children's adopted parents in Australia. I can assure all those wonderful people who so generously care for their "sons" and "daughters" at 'Raphael', that their kindness is the life - blood of the "Little White House".

Finally, there is the home for the mentally handicapped. There are about fifty patients here, and the task of caring for them is an exhausting one. Dorothy Huggard has shown wonderful patience looking after this aspect of the work.

In general, I was very impressed by 'Raphael', and by the work being done by Matron Usher and her band of helpers. Not many of us would be prepared or be able to give two years of our lives to such work. These people, from different countries and backgrounds, have done this and are an example not only to us, but also to the Indians themselves, an example of what can be accomplished for our Asian friends.

CHRISTMAS 1968 AT ' RAPHAEL ' :

Mr. B.K. Grover, one of the patients in the Hospital for the Chronic Sick, has kindly submitted the following description of Christmas 1968 at ' Raphael '. Mr. Grover is a 38 year old Bengali, who has been unfortunate enough to have been afflicted with Cerebral Palsy since birth. He has been with us since June 1966.

" I write this with great pleasure and a feeling of immense delight.

As usual Christmas was bright and gay. Everyone was in high spirits. Gaiety ruled all over as the day neared. On the night of Christmas Eve the staff sang carols with candles in their hands. They went round each unit thus singing melodiously and in chorus. It was highly appreciated by all except the Leprosy patients, who were blissfully ignorant of what was going on, and who continued dancing to the rhythms of their tribal drums.

Christmas Day was cloudy. The sky was overcast and threatening, but the inclement weather did not interrupt the celebrations. In the morning, after breakfast, tea was served to all the servants in the Staff Quarters. Tea over, money, presents and uniforms were distributed. Our Matron read out the message sent by the Group Captain, and after that, the children of the servants were given sweets and warm garments. In the afternoon an Indian Father Christmas visited all the Units and gave sweets, clothes and books to the inmates accordingly. At night the Xmas tree was tastefully decorated and brightly lit with colourful coloured lights. Decorations were also done in all the wards to give them a festive look. In short, it was a happy occasion and was enjoyed by all.

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The total number of patients being cared for at the end of December at ' Raphael ' was 304. They were divided as follows : -

Hospital for the Chronic Sick :

No. of patients at the beginning of December . . . . .	25
No. of admissions during the month . . . . .	8
No. of discharges during that time . . . . .	6
No. of deaths . . . . .	0
No. of patients at the end of December . . . . .	27

Matron and Dorothy Huggard, in response to urgent letters from a Mrs. Gleeson in Nanital ( 300 miles from Dehra Dun ), went in the hospital van to collect her 92 year old mother. This lady has now been permanently admitted to our hospital.

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Hospital for Tuberculosis Patients ;

No. of patients at the beginning of December . . . . .	17
No. of admissions since that time . . . . .	2
No. of discharges . . . . .	6
No. of patients at the end of December . . . . .	13

Our Medical Officer, Dr. Gupta, from the Civil Hospital visits the T.B. patients three times a week. Monthly sputum tests and three - monthly X - rays are taken, and the patients are discharged or treated according to the results.

ISTORY OF PROGRESS :

Last year, Miss Mansfield compiled a lengthy report which included comprehensive details of the staff and the work being done here. It is only natural that people become hazy about such details, so perhaps it is well that a reminder be given. Moreover, by reiterating facts about the background history, it adds to one's awareness of how ' Raphael ' has expanded over the years. Next month, we are planning to combine the dedication of " Ava Vihar " with a small celebration to commemorate the completion of ' Raphael 's ' first decade.

Group Captain and Mrs. Cheshire were married in Bombay on April 15th. 1959. Mrs. Cheshire ( formerly Mrs. Sue Ryder ) had already been awarded an O.B.E. for her work in aid of concentration camp victims, under an organisation founded by her , called " The Forgotten Allies Trust ". The Group Captain, at the time of his marriage, besides his renowned war exploits, for which he had been richly decorated, was immersed in a new vocation of establishing Homes for the Incurably Sick. There are, today, approximately 90 such Homes all over the world, 17 of which are in India. The idea of ' Raphael ' stemmed from the Founder's desire to launch a joint venture which would be separate from either of their previous commitments, and thus it was decided to build an International Centre at Dehra Dun, a town 158 miles north of Delhi.

This brings us to a frequently misunderstood fact : ' RAPHAEL ' IS NOT A CHESHIRE HOME. It is unique because :-

1. None of the Cheshire Homes have been jointly founded by the Group Captain and his wife.
2. At the outset, it was agreed that ' Raphael ' would not be permitted to solicitate for funds inside India. All finance and aid was to come from overseas. Compare this policy with that of the Cheshire Homes in India, or any other country, where they are totally dependant on local support for their existence.
3. Lastly, ' Raphael ' is not under the control of the Cheshire Home Trust in India. Decisions concerning ' Raphael ' are made by a local Advisory Council in conjunction with the Founders in London.

FINANCES. :

Maintenance costs are shared between England, Australia and New Zealand. Despite the fact that we are often referred to as " the American Hospital " neither money nor help comes to us from the U.S.A. The bulk of money raised in Australia and New Zealand comes from an adoption scheme whereby the destitute children, mentally retarded, spastic and leprosy patients are " adopted " or " endowed " by generous sponsors, who send annual monetary donations which help defray the maintenance costs.

The 26 acres, on which the various units of ' Raphael ' have been built, are leased permanently from the Forestry Department.

IMPORTANT DATES :

- 1958 . . . . . Tents were erected as Stage One of the project. 7 patients afflicted either with leprosy or mental deficiency, who had been found homeless and begging in the streets of Dehra Dun, were brought here then. From this nucleus of tents, the scheme gathered momentum.
- 1962 . . . . . First Little White House was built.
- 1965 . . . . . Hospital for the Chronic Sick was built.
- 1967 . . . . . Second Little White House was built. . . . /5.
- 1968 . . . . . T.B. Wards and Staff Quarters were built.

NEWS FROM SUPPORT GROUPS :A.C.T. News.

Greetings to All.

Since we last gave you our news, things have been relatively quiet as members joined family and friends in celebrating Xmas and holidays.

Our Xmas Dinner Dance held early December proved to be a most pleasant and gracefully successful evening. The High Commissioner of India, Mr. Thomas, though unexpectedly due to go to India the following day, attended as promised, and gave a speech commending the Ryder - Cheshire Foundations and their work, and promising his co-operation where possible.

About this time, we welcomed back to our Committee, Mr. Pat Ryan. My Ryan was one of the instigators of the Foundation in Canberra, and was responsible for a good deal of the initial work involved at the time of the Group Captain's visit. It is good to have him back with us.

We've had word from Bernadette Keane that our 24 boxes of clothing have arrived. How we'd like to be there to see the fashion parade ! and what with our 24 boxes, and Victoria's 33, we may hear of a new building programme at ' Raphael ' with so many tea chests available !

A further maintenance cheque has been forwarded from this Foundation by our Treasurer, Mrs. Murray. We hope to be able to send many more throughout 1969.

Our aim this year is to promote the name of the Ryder - Cheshire Foundation in the A.C.T., to swell its numbers and to be able to present Group Captain Cheshire with a healthy membership when he visits in 1970.

Our first fund-raising activity for the year was an Indian & Ice Cream Stall at the Canberra Day Fair. We were lucky that after some showers, the sun shone in its true Autumn - sunshine fashion and provided a great Fair Day atmosphere. An Indian friend from the High Commission put a variety of Indian Goods at our disposal, to be sold for the Foundation, and these attracted a great deal of attention. It was a most successful morning and Canberra people showed a lively interest in the jewellery, slippers, ornaments and materials displayed.

Our first social function for the year will be a Mixed Exhibition of Sculpture and Ceramics, to be held at the Australian Sculpture Galleries - we'll report on that later - that's all for now friends.

Gippsland Support Group Committee are very busy organising their Annual Dinner Dance, to be held this year in Moe on Saturday June 21st. As this is our main fund raising function, we hope it will again, be a success.

We have raised so far this financial year, the sum of \$1715.89. We feel a big thank you is due to a loyal band of supporters, the Hazelwood Construction Group, and especially, to Mr, Swainson. These men, who work at the Hazelwood Power Station have adopted Puran Singh, and give generously from their wages every week, totalling \$200 annually. The gift of \$300.00 we had from the Kelly family came as a result of this Group. Mr. Kelly was employed at Hazelwood, and, when his family found the contents of his money box was devoted to the children of ' Raphael ', they sent the \$300.00 to Mr. Swainson, to help continue the good work. Maybe there is an idea here for other work Groups to be formed.


PERSONAL :

DEEPEST SYMPATHY

is expressed to Miss Josephine Collins, the Australian Liaison Officer of the Foundations, on the death of her father, on 3rd. January, 1969 .

PROPOSED MELBOURNE WOMEN'S GROUP :

The Council of the Victorian Foundation recently considered a proposal that a Women's Group be formed in the Melbourne area, and accepted the idea enthusiastically. It was hoped that such a Group might hold daytime meetings to hear speakers or arrange film screenings, and provide an opportunity for lady members of the Foundation to meet together. Any ladies who would like to join such a Group could write to Mrs. P. Brooks, 2/20 Riversdale Road, Hawthorn 3122, or to the Secretary of the Victorian Foundation.

  
Ron Stagg, 2 Jarrahdale Street, Cheltenham, Victoria, 3191.

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