



'RAPHAEL'

NEWSLETTER OF

THE RYDER-CHESHIRE FOUNDATION

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Price 10c.

DISTRIBUTION OF CLOTHES AT 'RAPHAEL': From Bernadette Keane (Adoptions Secretary)

November 10th will be a happy day at 'Raphael', not only because it will be Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights, but also because it is the day on which gift clothing from Australia and New Zealand is to be distributed to the patients, children and servants. Each year, winter clothes are given out at Diwali time, summer clothing being distributed in March when the Holi Festival occurs. This letter then is an explanation and expression of thanks to all the Foundations and friends for the clothes which are sent to us every year. How we would manage without these consignments is inconceivable.

Perhaps it might be as well here to give a resume of what happens from the time the sweaters, frocks and shirts have been donated, until they are actually being worn by the inmates of 'Raphael'. Generously inclined Victorians are requested to send the clothing to Mrs. Betty Arundell, while Miss Anne Young accepts clothes from New South Wales. These two indefatigable workers for 'Raphael' take the responsibility for the sorting and packing of the used clothes into labelled tea-chests. Originally the Australian government dispatched the chests at nominal rates, but the arrangement ceased in 1967. The Ryder Cheshire Foundation in New South Wales, now receive strong co-operation from the St. Vincent de Paul Society, who sends the clothing for them. In Melbourne, despatch of the Victorian Foundation clothing is unselfishly undertaken by Mrs. Betty Arundell, a considerable burden as fumigation certificates, customs exemptions and import licences must be obtained before the lids can be nailed down. Negotiating to have the tea-chests put on a Bombay-bound ship is yet another part of the work involved.

Next, a duplicate copy of the Bill of Lading arrives at 'Raphael', which, along with several other documents, has to be signed by the local District Magistrate. Afterwards, these papers are sent to the clearing agents in Bombay, who notify us when the ship arrives, clear the consignment through Customs and load it onto a goods train for Dehra Dun, 900 miles away. Eventually we are notified that the clothing is being held at the Dehra Dun railway station. From here, the tea-chests are stacked onto a bullock cart and brought to 'Raphael', where they are put into Matron's office.

Usually Matron opens the boxes immediately, not only to verify from whom it has come, but to see what articles, if any, have been damaged en route. Some of the most needed items are sorted at once for the units, but on the whole the contents are stored in the clothes room awaiting the bi-annual distribution. Just prior to the appointed days, the clothing is again sorted to meet the needs of the various units, and the requirements of the people to whom the clothes will be given. It is customary for Matron to issue the clothing to the servants and their children, while the supervisors and senior staff of the units attend to the distribution there. The signature or thumb-print of each recipient is registered, this check being required for government records.

Always present is the suspicion that, unless detailed checking is carried out, the clothing may be indiscriminately sold in the bazaar. That then is the story of what happens to that old school blazer from the moment it is taken out of Mrs. Smith's wardrobe in Lithgow/Shepparton until it is being worn by one of our leprosy patients.

Finally, we do want to stress how important this life-line of clothing is for a charitable institution like ours. The clearance charges of the Bombay agents are minimal compared with the value of the goods and, despite the intricacies which accompany every consignment, we still estimate it to be more than worthwhile. We therefore thank you all for your past assistance, and sincerely hope that our appreciation and thanks will encourage you to continue sending used clothing to 'Raphael'.

For future reference, the following listings are given:

CLOTHES DEFINITELY WANTED: Children's frocks (aged 3 - 20 years), underwear, cardigans, jumpers, knitted scarves, pyjamas and nightgowns, knitted caps, long trousers, coats, raincoats, shirts and patchwork rugs.

WANTED IN LIMITED QUANTITIES: Children's socks, material lengths, baby napkins, blouses and children's petticoats.

DEFINITELY NOT WANTED: Swimsuits, skirts, frocks (except for children), hats (unless knitted), short-sleeved jumpers, coats without linings, adult petticoats, short trousers, stockings and evening dresses.

Yours gratefully,

Bernadette Keane (Adoptions Secretary)

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FROM A TEMPORARY VOLUNTEER

On holiday in India earlier this year, and needing a change from constant travelling 'on the cheap', I wrote to Matron Usher at 'Raphael'. I knew 'Raphael' was a Cheshire home, which I understood to be an orphanage. Yes, she replied immediately, owing to the fact that two of the volunteer nurses were due for holidays, she would be pleased if I could work at 'Raphael' temporarily, the sooner the better. So, prepared with uniforms (I'd intended working before leaving Australia), registration certificate and suitcase, I took off by bus for Dehra Dun.

As you know, it was no orphanage in the accepted sense, but a unique organisation where over three hundred physically disabled, destitute or mentally handicapped adults and children are cared for in a secure atmosphere in a serene area three miles from the town below a picturesque mountain range. I certainly wasn't expecting this.

I started work the following day. Although certain things were done at certain times, one could never call it a routine job, the unexpected was bound to crop up daily, if not hourly. The language difficulty was the most frustrating; I spoke no Hindi and shouted away in Strine in many a useless endeavour to make myself understood.

Mainly I worked in the Chronic Hospital, but spent several weeks in the T.B. ward, when one of the Indian nurses was ill. Sometimes I did a spot of office work to help Matron in sorting out and replying to the umpteen applicants who applied for the post of Administrator. Last of my jobs was in sorting out the pills and potions in the drug room and labelling the shelves so the medicines could be found easily. I mixed quite a greasy concoction of outdated ung., tab., lotio. and amp., which had to be buried well away from children, cows, Ulysses (Dorothy Huggard's U. P. Bitser), and Sebastian the cat. For a week, Shona (Sutherland) and I had one Rohit boarding with us at night - the frail two-week's old son of a patient who'd died of T.B. a week after admission. We took it in turns to feed our boy, and eventually 'parted' with him as far as Auntie Pam Holt in the Little White House who added him to her large family.

Ten eventful weeks condensed into a paragraph, it's hardly possible. I'll always be glad that the name I picked from the hat chanced to be 'Raphael' and that I had the opportunity of working where such a spirit of friendliness and understanding exists. I have the utmost respect and affection for Miss Usher, who works unsparingly for 'Raphael' as Matron/Administrator, and has the capacity to deal wholeheartedly with either emergency or commonplace, and who has a peppy sense of humour to boot.

Meeting and working with the volunteers among patients whose faith in our ministrations never seemed to waver was a fulfilling experience. Thus, as I'd hoped, it was working that made my Indian holiday complete. Now, unexpectedly, I'm odd-jobbing for 'Raphael' in quite different way - with your newsletter!

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CURRENT PROBLEMS IN "AVA VIHAR"

From Miss Bridget Turner

Here at 'Raphael' the Unit for the Mentally Retarded was started 10 years ago with a few children living in tents. In the intervening years, all applicants were taken in who were deemed worthy cases until the present number of 73 was reached. We still receive an average of 4 applications per week, but the waiting list has been closed for the past 18 months. So really 'Ava Vihar' has been answering a need, but has not been able to do much for the children under its roof beyond looking after the health of the patients as far as possible. We still have a constant battle against infection, due to the existing hygienic problems as 50% of our patients are incontinent.

Then there are the problems of our environment, the jungle sal trees being a breeding place for flies in the Summer; at the moment there is an atrocious situation due to lack of water because a pipeline broken at the beginning of August has yet to be repaired. (This can only be done when the monsoons waters subside). Soon we face the piercing cold of Winter when our main concern is to keep our children warm and healthy. However, during the past 12 months, the goals have been elevated, and a certain amount of progress has been made. We now have an Occupational Therapist, Mrs. Sharma, who devotes a considerable amount of time to speech therapy, as besides being retarded, many of our children cannot talk. We have divided our girls into two groups - trainable and non-trainable. A few in the first group doubtless were at one time educatable, but for most it is too late to be meaningful. The second group comprises those who only need custodial care, and also those who are either disturbed mentally, or whose habits are so bad and ingrained by now, that we cannot envisage much improvement at this time with the small amount of staff available. Less work has been carried out with the boys, but most of these definitely only require custodial care.

Consideration is being given to the possibility of establishing a Rehabilitation Centre here for those who could benefit from such therapy ... perhaps 30 of the existing 73 patients. For the moment the main deterrent is the financial implications.

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FOUNDATION AND GROUP NEWS

New South Wales Foundation and Support Groups

Miss Anne Young, a Director of the New South Wales Foundation, will be returning to 'Raphael' in January to take up the position of Sister In Charge of the hospital. Anne previously worked at 'Raphael' as a volunteer, both on the nursing and administrative sides. She is being sponsored by Australian Volunteers Abroad. Old friends and patients are eagerly awaiting her arrival, while we in Sydney feel a little sad to be saying goodbye. Anne has acted as Adoptions Secretary here, has looked after clothing collections and been a staunch member of the Northside committee. We all wish her a happy two years in India.

Miss Monica Bethel has taken over responsibility for clothing collections, and is doing an excellent job. Miss Ellen O'Keefe is a capable Adoptions Secretary.

We are pleased to report that membership of the Foundation is increasing and there have been sixteen new members in the last month.

'Raphael' has been experiencing a shortage of certain drugs, so Miss Margaret Power has been organising a drive to collect drug samples and donations. Drugs in short supply include the following:

P. A. S. , I. N. S. , Streptomycin, Vitamins, Cough Syrup, Penicillin, Di-Crystacin, Kenacort, Calcium, Epilan, Albuclid Eye drops, Tranquilizers, (especially Largactil, Librium and Sparine), Decadron, Intra-muscular Iron, Tanderil, Sulphonamides and High Protein Biscuits.

Cooma Branch recently held a most successful 'Night In India' dinner dance, which should clear about \$100. The Indian Embassy in Canberra and Air India helpfully provided flags and posters.

Ideal for Christmas gifts are attractive pocket diaries for 1970 with text and pictures concerning 'Raphael'. These are now available at 75 cents.

The Northside and Eastern Suburbs Support Groups

We would like to thank all members and friends who contributed to the success of our raffle, drawn at Mrs. Miles Melbourne Cup Luncheon, on November 4th.

We congratulate the winners:

Mrs. Kudyba, 23 Marlborough Place, St. Ives (Portable T. V. Set)
Miss M. Dowd, 27 Kings Road, Five Dock (Philips Stereo Record Player)
J. M. Morton, 14 Hilltop Crescent, Fairlight (Indian Coffee Service)

With deep appreciation, we acknowledge the donation of the Television Set by Mr. Sam Rosenwax, the generous concession allowed by Phillips on the Record Player, and the donation of the Indian Coffee Service by Miss Margaret Power.

Clare Support Group

As there have been several appeals for money from different organisations in the early part of the year, the Clare Support Group appeal was delayed until August. Money is still coming in, and the results would appear to be most gratifying. There is even a group of nurses in Adelaide who have made an adoption through Clare.

Dr. Merryfield, a member of the local committee who visited 'Raphael' last year, gave a most interesting talk to the local Rotary Club.

The possibility of placing collection boxes at strategic points locally, is being investigated.

Goulburn Valley Support Group

The group raised \$580.00 during 1969. Of this, \$153 was spent on wool and knitted into garments for 'Raphael' patients, which were included in the contents of twelve tea chests of clothing generously donated during a clothing drive.

\$150 was put towards the endowment of Helen,
\$100 towards Mrs. Brooks' visit to 'Raphael',
\$150 was sent for urgent current needs of 'Raphael'.

Form III boys at South Shepparton Tech. have adopted Narily. The executive committee will receive their cheques at a presentation night on December 4th.

Chief objective for 1970 will be to consolidate increased present support. We anticipate with pleasure the visit of Group Captain Cheshire next year - a highlight which will increase the feeling of immediacy and compassion already existing here.

Melbourne Support Group

We continue to hold meetings at the University Club, 100 Collins Street, Melbourne, on the first Thursday of each month, at 8 p. m.

Our fund-raising activities over the last weeks, have included a theatre night to see 'Canterbury Tales' and two enjoyable and financially-successful card parties held at the home of Miss Anne Rose.

Money has also been raised from the sale of attractive Christmas cards kindly donated by Miss Geraldine Burrows for the benefit of 'Raphael'.

Gippsland Support Group

Our annual dinner dance was held in Moe on June 22nd. Mr. & Mrs. Ray, who were to be guests of honour, were unable to come, and at the last minute Dr. Sinnah, from C. S. I. R. O. graciously stepped into the breach and we are most grateful to him. The Honourable Minister for Fuel and Power, Mr. Balfour and Mrs. Balfour were again with us and Mr. & Mrs. Brooks. The evening was a tremendous success socially; we did not fare so well financially.

Our annual meeting was held at Moe in August. This year we were guests of Rotary, and Mr. Opas gave us some of his precious spare time to be guest speaker.

Office bearers for 1969-70 were elected at the October meeting. They are:

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| Mr. Terry Synan | President |
| Mrs. Peggy McPhee | Secretary |
| Mr. Robert McPhee | Treasurer |
| Mrs. Sandra Walker | Minutes Secretary |
| Mrs. Mary Howlett | Adoptions Officer. |

Unfortunately for Ryder Cheshire in Gippsland and Moe in general, Mr. Bruce Tuck had to resign as our secretary because he is being transferred. Mr. Tuck has been with the Gippsland Support Group since its inception, and will be greatly missed by us all.

We are planning another Indian Curry Dinner for November, and hope to improve on our success of last year.

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ON THE LIGHTER SIDE AT 'RAPHAEL'

The 'Raphael' leprosy patients are not permitted to beg on the streets - that being the usual way in which leprosy victims earn a living in India. Members of the Colony at 'Raphael' include a likeable set of rogues who like to think up wily, money-making schemes. Some time ago, it was discovered that, in between weeding and hoeing, the gardeners of the Colony were growing opium!

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Last year, on Christmas Day, paper-wrapped sweets were distributed to the mentally deficient patients in 'Ava Vihar'. The mistake became immediately apparent. The sweets were hurriedly taken back for unwrapping, but not before some patients had gulped theirs down - paper and all!

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On her return to 'Raphael' in July, after two months in England, Matron Usher enquired about the two nursing veils and the uniform she'd left behind. Reluctantly it was related how, as it was thought, she would not be returning, the veils had been used for napkins in the Mental Unit. And the uniform? Bandages, for use in the hospital!

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Mrs. Betty Beckett supervises the running of the Leprosy Colony. In written petitions from her charges, she is addressed as 'Leper In Charge'.

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THE AUSTRALIAN FOUNDATIONS

A. C. T.

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Adoptions Secretary: Miss J. Collins 7c/587 Toorak Road,
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NEWSLETTER EDITRESS

This newsletter is now being edited by Miss Fairlie Apperley of the Victorian Foundation, on behalf of the Australian Foundations. All copy should be sent to her at 52 Canterbury Road, Toorak, Victoria 3142. Closing dates for copy are the 15th February, May, August and November.

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