



'RAPHAEL'

NEWSLETTER OF THE RYDER-CHESHIRE FOUNDATIONS OF AUSTRALIA

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS OF THE AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR OVERSEAS AID.

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VISIT TO "RAPHAEL" IN JANUARY 1971

The first visit which I made to a Ryder-Cheshire Home in India was to one situated in Delhi. Major General Virendra Singh who is Chairman of the Foundation in India took me and some other members of the Law Conference who were interested in the work of the Foundation, to inspect this Home. There are 18 homes in India entirely supported by the people of India. The only one which receives outside support is "Raphael". The Home which we saw is a small one containing only about 30 people. However, this Home will soon be vacated and the inmates and others will be received into a considerably larger home which is being built on land which the Foundation purchased from the Government at a nominal figure. This is in a good area which is being used for hospitals, schools and other institutions. We visited the building which is in the course of construction. It will cost about A \$100,000 and will be modern and convenient.

On Thursday, 14th January eight Australians in two motor cars travelled to Dehra Dun. We left our hotels at 7.30 a.m. and arrived back at about 9.30 p.m. Most of them had had little, if any, knowledge of the Ryder-Cheshire Foundations. All came back full of enthusiasm for the work that is being done. When we reached Dehra Dun we were met by two employees of the Home who escorted us to the home of Lt. Col. Puri, the Administrator of "Raphael". He and Mrs. Puri live in a very pleasant bungalow which is some three miles from "Raphael". They had invited there to meet us the various officers of the Home, and Mrs. Puri had prepared a delicious luncheon for all of us. She is a doctor who practises her profession on a part-time basis. The officers whom we met were:- Mrs. Win McAlpin the Adoptions Secretary and Liason Officer who has taken the place formerly filled by Bernadette Keane. There was a report from Miss Keane in the December 1970 issue of the Newsletter. Mrs. McAlpin is a widow with a grown-up family. She has been at Raphael for only three months but prior to that had been doing voluntary work at Madras. It is difficult to differentiate between the sacrifice made by a woman like Mrs. McAlpin who must miss the comforts of her own home, and who showed a great interest in music and the theatre and the arts generally, and that made by the younger women whose service impressed the members of our party particularly because it was felt that they were leaving their homes at a time when most young women are contemplating matrimony. Mrs. McAlpin was eager for news of Australia and particularly news from Melbourne.

Miss Ann Young a double certificated sister who is the Nursing Superintendent. She is also an Australian and has been at "Raphael" for some time. Her work must be very exacting. She told me that there was one period during which she had been unable to get any relief for some considerable time and she had been on duty without a break for a period of some weeks. At the end of this time when relief arrived she found that she slept for four days. She is a charming and attractive young woman, I asked her whether the volunteers missed social life very greatly, but she informed me that during their time off they do have opportunity for such activity. The climate at Dehra Dun is considered healthy and the township is so beautifully situated with a background of mountains, that it has for many years been the home of good boarding schools. It is also the site of a military establishment. The young women from "Raphael" therefore find themselves in demand for outings such as picnics and other social functions, and Sister Young told me that it was necessary for them to limit their availability, because of course they work very hard, and sometimes for very long hours, and they are all very much bound up with the work of "Raphael" and the welfare of the inhabitants. It was touching when we made the inspection of the Home to see the affection displayed by the inmates towards all the young helpers.

Miss Robyn Rankin is the Physiotherapist and comes from Melbourne. She has been at "Raphael" for twelve months.

Mrs. Dhun Sharma of India is the Occupational Therapist. She will be leaving shortly as she wishes to extend her own training. She already has a Master's Degree in Occupational Therapy from New York. I do not know who is to replace her, but Miss Young informed me that they are to obtain some assistance, at least in the field of nursing, from some Spanish Nuns who are due at "Raphael" soon.

Our short time at "Raphael" did not enable us to see the work of the Physiotherapist or the Occupational Therapist being carried out. At the Home in Delhi we were able to watch a severely crippled man using a tool held between the big toe and the second toe of his right foot to do certain rough carpentering work. A young woman who was confined to bed and could lie only prone, was doing exquisite needlework. She was engaged in making table mats which were to form part of a trousseau. We were each given two handkerchiefs which she had made on which the tatting was beautifully executed. At "Raphael", we saw some of the young women doing excellent needlework.

Dr. Kapur is an Indian physician who has specialist knowledge in leprosy, and attends the leprosy patients at "Raphael".

By the Hon. Justice Roma Mitchell,
President of the South Australian Foundation.

(The concluding part of Justice Mitchell's article will be included in the next issue of the Newsletter.)

OF INTEREST FROM THE LAST "RAPHAEL" REPORT

March was the month of the Holi Festival and "RAPHAEL" celebrated in appropriate style with the indiscriminate blessings of coloured waters. To this end coloured powders were distributed to the Leper colony and festivities began early on the morning of the 12th, culminating with music and dancing in the precincts of Staff Quarters and the Hospital. Promptly at 2 p.m. these activities ceased by tradition and the staff watched a straggling remnant of rainbow hued patients dancing back to the colony. Staying with us at that time were two young Australian girls who thoroughly enjoyed the fun.

This being the third of the great Hindu festivals perhaps I may be permitted to explain the myth behind it:- Lord Shiva was doing penance and Cupid trying his hardest to interrupt it. Several ruses failed until finally he conceived the idea of making all the flowers to burst into bloom. Shiva stirred and, roused from his meditation, saw not only the beauty of the flowers but Cupid also hiding himself behind one, and angered at his cunning Shiva, using the power of his third eye, consumed him in flames. When Cupid's wife heard of this she approached Lord Shiva and begged him to restore her husband. This Shiva would not do but he relented to the extent of allowing Cupid to be active everywhere in invisible form. That is why, says the myth, Spring is the season of romance, of youth, of new birth, of joy and why we feel all the strange emotions associated with Spring - Cupid, unseen, is everywhere and everything is newly created like the flowers.

The origin of the coloured water sprinkling lies in the story of Lord Krishna who found in this season of restlessness a certain laziness amongst his playmates (the gopis). To stimulate their flagging energies he sprinkled them with coloured rose water. So the two stories mingle to give us Holi - the springtime festival. In the past the flowers of the flame tree were gathered and soaked. When the water ran deep orange the flowers were squeezed and perfume added and this lovely perfumed flower water was then used to sprinkle in blessing. Unfortunately this sweet custom has given way to coloured powders. The spirit, however, remains.

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CLOTHING CONSIGNMENTS:

21 teachests from Melbourne and ten from Sydney have been opened and all the contents are in excellent condition. We in Staff Quarters are grateful for the table linen and bed linen which is badly needed to replace our worn supplies

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LEPROSY COLONY :

During the month some unpleasantness occurred which necessitated firm disciplinary action and eight leprosy patients decided to leave the colony rather than submit to rulings outlawing untouchability. With eight vacancies we were able to admit a 20 year old Nepalese girl who is a positive case requiring urgent treatment to arrest the disease. At the moment her only disfigurement is the nose and in time it is hoped plastic surgery might restore the feature. 48 members of the colony continue to do most useful work.

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Mark Raper arrived on April 28th to give talks and show films to Kyabram and Shepparton Schools. He also gave an evening discussion and film showing to Rotoract. His recent visit to Dehra Dun added to the interest of all who heard him speak.

The Bachelors Club of Shepparton recently took out an Adoption, also Mr. and Mrs. Schoots, Mooroopna, bringing total adoptions to 8 and 4 Endowments with the promise of more in the near future.

We have received the 1971 Projects List and feel sure this will help many interested people to decide on what they will do. The Primary School children cannot always raise as much as their elder brothers and sisters but this List gives them a choice. These children are very interested and enjoy the talks and films on "Raphael". One small girl after one such talk went home and informed her parents solemnly that they "must help that there Raquel Welch", fortunately Dad is on our Committee and was wise as to just who was in need of help!.

Our Annual General Meeting is to be held on Tuesday 15th June, 1971 at 8 p.m. at the Bouchier Street State School Library. Guest Speaker will be Walter Jona M.P. and we are hoping for a good crowd to come along and enjoy his talk and film. All are welcome.

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BALLARAT SUPPORT GROUP

Two new members, Mr. and Mrs. Jim White (710 Lydiard St., Nth.) have been elected to our committee. This wonderful couple, who devote much time to helping others, have agreed to act as joint clothing co-ordinators for our group.

Mr. Frank Ridley, a committee member, has accepted the position of assistant secretary to lighten the secretary's work.

Another adoption has been taken out, and two offers of money towards a further adoption have been received.

As a result of Mrs. Pat Brooks' talk to East Ballarat Rotary Club, a cheque has been forwarded to Melbourne. Through the press coverage, donations of clothing and clean linen for bandages have been received.

Mrs. Watta, also a committee member, has the ladies of Buninyong working on yet another project - woollen caps for the children of "Raphael" - five dozen have been completed already.

At our last meeting it was moved that a cheque for \$1,800 be forwarded to Melb. As a result of a visit to Launceston Church Grammar School by our Vice-President, Mr. R.M. Horner, the boys of the Junior School have enthusiastically agreed to adopt a leprosy patient. The Headmaster hopes to visit others in the scheme.

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N.S.W. FOUNDATION:

The Annual General Meeting was held at the anti-T.B. Association rooms on 27th April and the financial report was most encouraging. Our profit for the year was \$9084.38, compared with last year's amount of \$5403.00.

This was due to an increase in donations and adoptions of \$3051, to a rise of \$898 on functions and an increase on the sales of Christmas cards of \$193 over last year.

An amount of \$6350 was transferred to London and current assets held amount to \$4173.

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SYDNEY SUPPORT GROUP

Sydney Support Group has had a very successful fund raising quarter, beginning with a most enjoyable pool party at the home of Mr. and Mrs. K Gale, followed by a theatre party and an evening at the Festival Ballet. Lane Gove Group held a stall in April.

Our future includes a theatre party to the Russian Ballet, and plans are well under way for the large raffle mentioned in the last Newsletter.

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LITHGOW

The Annual General Meeting was held in the R.S.L. Board room on March 30th, and the following office bearers were re-elected.

P. Robson President

J. English Secretary

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ORANGE

Support Group is making plans for a film evening on June 4th. All films will be devoted to skiing.

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NEWCASTLE

Members are having a membership drive and are anxious to contact newcomers and everyone is enthusiastically supporting the garage building project at "Raphael"

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VICTORIAN FOUNDATION

Some considerable time has been spent at recent Council and Executive Meeting discussing the principle on which an Australian Federation of Ryder-Cheshire Foundations could be established. A draft Constitution has been prepared and circulated, embodying the principle of a central body to co-ordinate Australia-wide activities but without affecting the autonomy of the separate State, and A.C.T., Foundations. It is hoped to bring the Federation into being later in the year and a full report will appear in the newsletter in due course.

At the Executive Meeting in April it was agreed that three months' maintenance, and the Foundation's annual grant towards the upkeep of the T.B. Unit, totalling \$11,450, should be remitted to "Raphael" in a single sum, bringing total remittances for the financial year to over \$20,000.

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MELBOURNE SUPPORT GROUP

Our function "Breakfast On Sunday" held on 25th April was a thoroughly enjoyable one, as all who attended will agree. We are greatly indebted to Gabrielle McHugh and her parents for allowing us the use of their home for the occasion. "Breakfast" (definitely a four-star one) was served in the McHugh's attractive back garden. Thanks must go to all group members who worked so hard to make a success of this function, which netted a profit of over \$100.

Our May meeting was held at the home of Mary Hill, where we heard a talk given by Mark Raper after his trip to India earlier in the year. Mark spent most of his time working in Calcutta among the dying and truly destitute from the street, as part of a team there. He managed a two day trip to "Raphael" and gave us an interesting account of its set-up, and his impressions as a visitor there.

Also at the May meeting, it was decided to allocate some of our funds for one or two of the items drawn up in a list of projects for "Raphael" which has been compiled recently. Money has now been sent for two wheelchairs, a bicycle for the volunteers ("Raphael" is a good three miles from Dehra Dun) and four ceiling fans. Our enthusiasm has drained funds considerably, so this will call for greater efforts on the part of the Melbourne Support Group in the new financial year.

Mrs. Margaret Quigley, the Group's Treasurer (50-3668) still has several hundred tea towels available. These retail at 80 cents and can still be obtained in all colours. Groups or individuals wishing to purchase these attractively designed tea towels should contact Margaret on the above number.

Meetings continue to be held at the University Club, 100 Collins Street, on the first Thursday of each month, at 8 p.m. New members are always welcome. Our Annual General Meeting will take place on June 3rd.

COPY FOR NEWSLETTER:

Please send all copy to:

Miss F. Apperly, 52 Canterbury Road, Toorak. 3142. Victoria.

by : 15th February, May, August, November.



THE AUSTRALIAN FOUNDATIONS

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