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ISSUE NO.1
SUMMER 1994

CHESHIRE *Smile* INTERNATIONAL

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE LEONARD CHESHIRE FOUNDATION

IN THIS ISSUE

World Week

The whos, whens
and where-froms

Miles of Smiles

In-depth features
from India, Spain,
the Caribbean,
Portugal, Ethiopia
and the Philippines



Ron Travers

A look at the career
of an amazing man

Speak Out

How important is
terminology?



EDITOR'S



COMMENT

Welcome to *Cheshire Smile International* – the new magazine for and by everybody connected with The Leonard Cheshire Foundation world-wide.

It was one of Leonard Cheshire's recurring messages that the Foundation should constantly be renewing itself, in order to move with the times and remain relevant to the modern world and its people.

The organisation has risen to the challenge and in just 45 years has grown from a single UK Home into a vast, international body which boasts more than 320 Homes and Services in 51 countries across the globe.

Which is why we felt the need for a magazine which reflects the Foundation of today, and will act as a symbol of unity and a means of communication between its members all over the world. A magazine which reflects the rich diversity of cultures, lifestyles and attitudes of all our readers – from Canada and Chile, to China and the Philippines.

In other words, this is **YOUR** magazine – whoever you may be and wherever you are in the world. We want to hear from you and whether you have an article to contribute, an opinion to air or a criticism to express – we've tried to make sure that the new *Smile* has a section for you.

Please do write to us, for only you can help us make *Cheshire Smile International* into a magazine worthy of the Foundation and ALL of its members.

Jennie Taylor

Jennie Taylor
Editor

Contents

NEWS

- World Week** 4
and the new Cheshire Charter
- News** 6
from around the world
- Ronald Travers – Cheshire Ambassador Extraordinaire** 8
Kay Christiansen looks back on an incredibly varied career

FEATURES

- Miles of Smiles** 13-26
Features on our Homes and Services around the world
- Spotlight India** 14
Kate Buchanan gives an overview of Cheshire Homes India
- Focus on Madras** 16
An in-depth look at two Indian Homes, at Manappakam and Covelong
- Filipino Flyers** 18
One man's death-defying bid to help the Philippines to help themselves
- Caring in the Caribbean** 20
Director General James Stanford takes in Jamaica, Grenada and Trinidad & Tobago
- Making a Difference** 22
The unique project which is improving life for thousands of Ethiopians

Cheshire Smile International is supplied as a free service to all Cheshire Foundation Homes and Services. Because of this, we do try to keep costs to a minimum and are extremely grateful for any contributions made towards the running of the magazine.

To make a donation, please make your cheque payable to The Leonard Cheshire Foundation, and send it to The Editor, Cheshire Smile International, 26-29 Maunsel Street, London SW1P 2QN, England.

The Leonard Cheshire Foundation promotes the care, general well-being and rehabilitation of people with physical, mental and learning disabilities, through more than 320 Homes and Services around the world.

Front cover: Cheshire smiles from children at the Addis Ababa home in Ethiopia
Photo: Framework

- Sun, Sand, and Self-Determination** 24
A look at Spain's fast-developing Homes and Services
- Portugal – People First** 26
Life in Lisbon's Cheshire Home
- Taylor-Made** 28
Oxford's pioneering student house

REGULARS

- What's New** 10
The latest on technology, equipment and information
- Global Kitchen** 12
Traditional recipes from Spain and Portugal
- International Diary** 27
What's on in the world of disability
- Announcements** 31
- Window on the World** 32

YOUR SAY

- Speak Out** 11
How important is terminology?
- Letters** 30
Your views, comments and experiences
- Pen Pals** 30
Your chance to join our international letter-writing network

Editorial

Editor: Jennie Taylor
Managing Editor: Paul Sample
Reporter: Brigitte Marulli de Barletta
Editorial Consultant: Kay Christiansen
Designer: Duncan Wilson

Advertising

Advertising Manager: Paul Sample

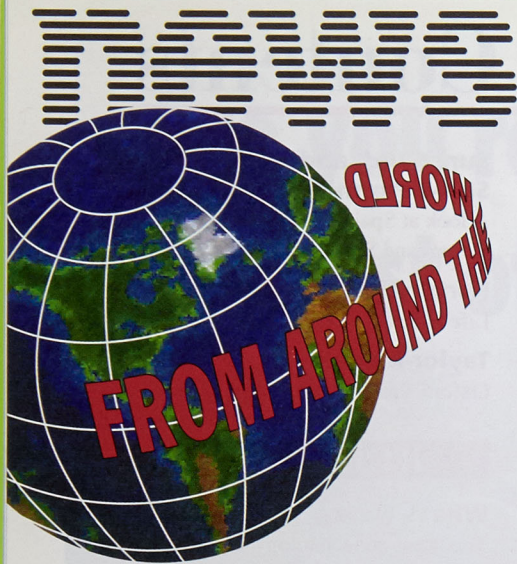
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This month, for the first time ever, representatives from all of the 51 countries in which the Foundation operates will be brought together under one roof.

World Week 1994 will reunite people from our Homes and Services in every corner of the globe – from Argentina to Indonesia, Canada to Swaziland. Congregating in London, they will have the opportunity to share problems and experiences, to discover a little about how the Foundation operates in other countries and – perhaps most importantly – to get to know each other as individuals with a common purpose.



Photo: Kim Naylor

Patrick Mabunda from South Africa, being interviewed in 1989 by the BBC World Service

WORLD WEEK

Organiser Nicky Baly looks forward to the event of the decade.



Bombay resident Ramesh Kripilani with dancing partner, at the 1989 International Week disco. Ramesh is also one of the delegates at this year's World Week.

World Week first began in embryo form in 1969, as the Foundation's International Conference. Since then, the organisation itself has expanded into a world-wide body which incorporates 125 Homes and Services across the UK plus some 200 overseas. The last International Week, in 1989, was attended by delegates from 37 countries; but this year's World Week is by far the biggest and most ambitious event organised by the Foundation to date.

The Week will run from 6 to 13 June and will feature a two-day conference; a Royal reception in the presence of Prince Charles; a Government reception at Lancaster House; and a grand finale at **Le Court Cheshire Home** with a special performance by The Red Devils parachute display team.

Most of the costs have been met by generous donations from various individuals and companies – not

least being British Airways, Singapore Airlines, National Westminster Bank and Boots the Chemist.

A large number of people are also donating their time and expertise throughout the Week, while many UK Homes and Services have offered hospitality, transport and even sponsorship for overseas delegates. Such support has been invaluable, not only to ensure the smooth-running of the event, but also to confirm the Foundation's status as an internationally united body.

Delegates from Nigeria, Japan, the Philippines and Thailand



WEEK 1994

A Charter for the 21st Century

This month's World Week will not only bring together Foundation residents, staff and representatives from all corners of the globe; it will also see the launch of a new international Cheshire Charter, which sets out our beliefs, principles and future aims in greater detail than ever before.

The Charter, which builds on the existing Mission Statement, was first conceived during the recent Strategic Review. It is seen as an important tool for supporting some of the general aims of that Review, which were to identify the main policy challenges likely to face the

organisation over the next 10 years, to review the internal decision-making and management process, and to examine ways of strengthening the relationship between the UK and international sides of the Foundation's work.

The new Charter is specifically worded to be acceptable to Leonard Cheshire Homes and Services throughout the world, and as such will serve as a symbol of unity for the Foundation.



Offering choice and opportunity to people with disabilities

THE LEONARD CHESHIRE CHARTER

Our Mission is to assist people with disabilities throughout the world, regardless of their colour, race or creed, by providing the conditions necessary for their physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

We believe that each person, whatever his or her disability, is a uniquely valuable individual and that people with disabilities should have the personal freedom to pursue their aspirations and take their own place in the world.

Our Aim is to offer to those with disabilities:-

- Unquestioning recognition of their full human rights
- Standards of excellence in all aspects of care from both staff and volunteers
- The support of a forward-looking and responsive organisation, aware of their needs and those of their carers.
- The opportunity to take an effective part at every level in running our services.
- Partnership in a continuing endeavour to help others, whatever the need may be, in the field of disability.

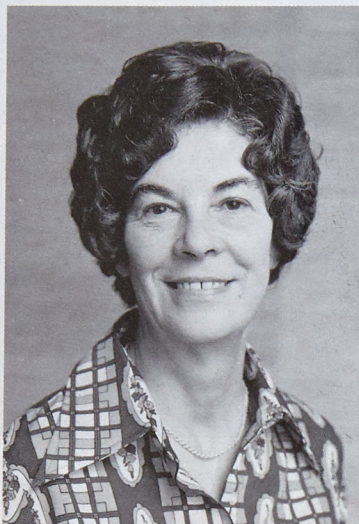
Former Editor Retires

After nearly 13 years of service to the Foundation, Kay Christiansen has retired as Editor of Cheshire Smile.

Kay joined the organisation in 1981 as Public Relations Officer, having worked as a Fleet Street journalist and then Head of Information at The Spastics Society.

In January 1987, she took over responsibility for the magazine from its former Editors Dennis Jarret and Frances Hopwood – both residents at Le Court.

Everyone at The Leonard Cheshire Foundation would like to send their warmest wishes to Kay on her retirement, and their thanks for many years of valuable work – it's certainly a hard act to follow!



Kay in 1981

Double Your Money!

What would £6 buy in England? Half a theatre ticket? Two burgers? A pair of socks?

In India, the equivalent of £6 will buy a full meal for 100 people! And the fact that comparatively small sums are worth so much more in other countries has become the inspiration for a brilliant new scheme.

Basically an extension of the twinning concept, the International Support Scheme enables Homes and Services to give money towards Foundation projects in other countries. Although not yet officially launched, the Scheme has already attracted five UK Homes, whose donations will go towards specific purchases such as vehicles and equipment in India, Kenya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka and Uganda.

Describing the Scheme, Director General James Stanford said: "This is a fantastic opportunity for Homes and Services to support worthwhile projects and have the satisfaction of knowing that their money has gone much further than it would in their own country".

UK Home Receives £100,000

A UK Home received its largest financial gift ever this year, when it was presented with a cheque for no less than £100,000!

Douglas House, which is situated at Brixham in South Devon, was given the money by its Paignton Support Group to help finance a major refurbishment programme.

Receiving the cheque, Chairman of Leonard Cheshire Foundation Services in South Devon, Peter McDonald, said: "The Foundation has

Last Chance for Budding Writers

Do you fancy your skills as a writer? If so, you could be in line for one of three large cash prizes – totalling £300 – to be presented in the 1994 Hampden Inskip Literary Awards.

The competition is open to anyone within the Foundation internationally – whether a resident, client, volunteer, advocate or member of staff. Each contribution must be not more than 5,000 words and cover either:

1. Any subject concerning the problems and aspirations of people with disabilities; or
2. Aspects of care practice and management.

But hurry with your entries, because the closing date for this year is 1st October. Contributions will be selected on the basis of their originality and quality of research and authorship, with three prizes awarded of £150, £100 and £50 each.

Entries should be sent c/o Cheshire Smile International, 26-29 Maunsel Street, London SW1P 2QN England.

always received enormous support from the people of South Devon and I am confident that they will again give us the financial backing which we need to develop our work for physically disabled people, both in Douglas House and in their own homes".



Photo: Mike Peters

Peter McDonald, Chairman of Services in South Devon, receiving the £100,000 cheque from members of the Paignton Support Group

India Adopts Logo

Cheshire Homes India has taken the ground-breaking decision to adopt a common letterhead bearing the official Foundation logo.

The move, which will bring every Home and Service throughout India under the same symbol, was made at the organisation's AGM on 9 January. Its aim was stated as being: "to help develop a mutually beneficial global identity with Cheshire Homes everywhere".

Since its official launch in January 1992, the distinctive red feather symbol has been adopted in more than 20 countries worldwide – from the USA and Canada to China, Sri Lanka and Singapore.

Welcoming this latest adoption, Marketing Co-ordinator Helen Hill said: "I am delighted that the overseas Homes in India and in many other countries have been so positive about the new logo. It is an essential means of grouping us all under one visual banner and reflects the unity of the Foundation as a whole."

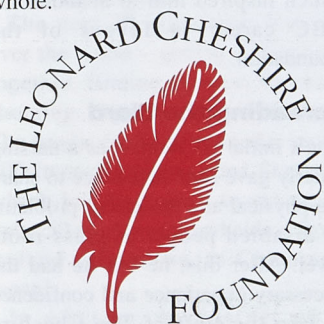


Photo: Ulrike Price, Mencap

Civil Rights Defeat

Campaigners in Britain saw hopes of securing anti-discrimination legislation for disabled people dashed on Friday 6th May when Members of Parliament tabled 80 amendments to an equality Bill – effectively killing it.

The move was a bitter blow to campaigners. Just a month before, on 11th March, Members of Parliament voted unanimously in favour of the Civil Rights (Disabled Persons) Bill. It followed vigorous campaigning by concerned individuals, groups and organisations across the

country – climaxing on 9 March, when some 2,000 people converged on London for a mass lobby of Parliament. In addition, an amazing quarter of a million people wrote to their MPs asking them to vote for the Bill.

Many other countries already have comprehensive legislation to outlaw discrimination against disabled people – including America, Canada, New Zealand, France and Australia.

Britain still has a long way to go before civil rights for disabled people become a reality in law.

Japanese Residents Get the Heave-Ho!

Residents of **Harima Independence Home (Harima Jiritsu No Ie)** in Japan were treated to a special ceremony recently, when local villagers heaved a two-tonne shrine all the way up the mountainside on their behalf.

And not content with that, the troupe of young men then proceeded

to give a traditional display which involved lifting the shrine into the air several times!

Harima Home, which caters for some 60 residents with cerebral palsy, has a very good reason to celebrate. The building has just been extended, with the addition of a Community Hall which combines live-in and leisure facilities. Relatives, volunteers and trainees can now stay in one of two tatami

mat rooms (traditional Japanese bedrooms), with access to a fully-fitted bathroom and kitchen.

Meanwhile, Japan's other Cheshire Home – **Hanshin Jiritsu No Ie** – has also completed extensive building work thanks to a donation from the local horse-racing track.

Their latest extension will provide short-term respite care for four people, plus a larger central switch-board area.

Photo: Richard Sykes



Ronald Travers

Cheshire Ambassador Extraordinaire

.....

This month, the Foundation's World Week in London will give retiring International Director Ronald Travers his last opportunity to say goodbye and God Speed to old friends.

It will be the latest step in an amazingly varied career which has already covered television production, charity directorship, international travel and more than 20 years in his current post. Here, Kay Christiansen pays a tribute to the man and his work.

In 1970, Ronald Travers gave up his highly successful career as a BBC Producer to become nursing orderly at Le Court Cheshire Home in Hampshire.

It was a huge step – he had risen to the top of his profession through such TV triumphs as *The Canterbury Tales* and *Z Cars*, and had recently won worldwide acclaim plus numerous prizes (including the coveted Premio Italia Award) for his series *The Six Wives of Henry VIII*.

However, Ron's seemingly drastic change of course was not taken on an impulse. On the contrary, his involvement with the Foundation goes all the way back to 1956, when he first started working as a volunteer at Le Court during the weekends and holidays. He was joined in this by his close friends, the legendary broadcaster Richard Dimbleby and his wife Dilys, whom he married after Richard's death.

It was the needs of those disabled people he was working with and the dedication, certainty and leadership of his mentor Leonard Cheshire, which inspired him to abandon his BBC career in favour of the Foundation.

Spreading the Word

Ron's initial six months as a nursing orderly gave him the chance to share the physical and emotional problems of disabled people at grass-roots level. After this, he felt he had the necessary experience and confidence to join the staff of The Cheshire Foundation and to serve it in a wider sense, using his organisational talents and abilities to get a Home – as opposed to a Show – on the road.

At this point, faced with growing numbers of both calls for help and offers of support, Leonard Cheshire asked Ron to deputise for him. And so he embarked on endless travel throughout the UK – talking at luncheons, lecturing, attending conferences and Rotary club meetings, visiting schools, and receiving much-needed donations.



Ron joins the children of Gighessa Cheshire Home in Ethiopia for mealtime

He also set up a counselling service for residents and staff, which went on to become the Foundation's network of Care and Development Officers.

Travelling the World

Ron's first overseas assignment was a trip to Madison, New Jersey, following an English doctor's request to set up a Home there. The residence was eventually opened after a long struggle and today there are no less than nine Cheshire Homes in the USA.

The next 20 years took Ron all over the world – getting committees together, finding finance, trouble-shooting, cajoling and persuading. The results can be found today in the 200 overseas Homes and Services which he has helped to set up in some 50 countries worldwide – from Ireland and Russia, to China and Japan!

In addition, he has set up a Training Service which focuses on giving indigenous staff the skills to train others rather than constantly relying on aid programmes.

A Very Special Project

When the horror of the second Ethiopian famine shocked the world in 1985, Ron travelled to its capital Addis Ababa where the Foundation has had homes for many years. There, plans were laid for a small feeding centre with funds from Britain's Overseas Development

Administration and the European Community.

Originally catering for lactating mothers and children under five, through a specialised programme of family planning and nutrition, the centre has since grown and flourished and, as well as feeding 7,000 people, has recently established a vocational rehabilitation centre for young people.

.....
“During his period in office, Ronald Travers guided and achieved vast expansion of the overseas work, not only through his efficient administration, but more particularly through the influence of his personality. It is largely through his personal efforts that the Foundation's overseas work is now so widely spread and so firmly established throughout the world.”
.....

*Sir Henry Marking,
Chairman of the Foundation's
International Committee
from 1979 to 1992.*

Lasting Tributes

The centre in Addis Ababa is just one of many lasting tributes to Ron's dedication and sheer hard work.

Amazingly, in addition to his work for the Foundation, he has also played an active part in numerous national and international disability organisations – including the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR), the Council for World Organisations for the Handicapped and the Council for Sexual and Personal Relationships of the Disabled (SPOD).

He is also Director of the Richard Dimbleby Cancer Fund and a Governor of the united Medical and Dental Schools of Guy's and St Thomas's Hospital, and it is to these organisations that he plans to dedicate much of his time in the future.



February 1990: an audience with the Otumfuor (Ashanti King) of Ghana, who expressed his support for the Cheshire Home in Kumasi

While Ron can be confident that his work at the Foundation is passing into safe hands – in the form of his successor Rupert Ridge – it goes without saying that he will be greatly missed.

Asked to describe Ron, many people speak of his 'human qualities': his wicked and irreverent sense of humour, his genuine kindness and his keen ability to bring out the best in everyone.

Most important of all, though, it is thanks to Ron's dedication and expertise that many thousands of people all over the world have been given the chance to lead the life that they want. ■

Ensuring a Smooth Ride

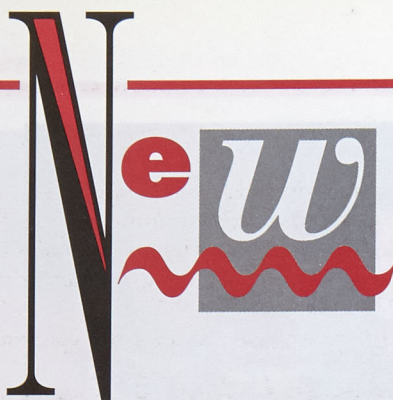
If you've always wanted to travel the world, but felt daunted by the prospect of limited access, unsympathetic staff and non-existent accommodation, then a new series of guidebooks for wheelchair users could be just for you.

Entitled the Smooth Ride Guides – *Freewheeling Made Easy*, the books are small and user-friendly, with lots of attractive colour photographs. In addition to giving general information on climate, medication and medical treatment, they provide comprehensive details of hotel facilities for disabled people, descriptions of major tourist areas and accessible attractions, and advice on international and domestic travel (including terminal and airline facilities, and transport).



Although specifically targeted at travellers from the UK, most of the information contained in the guides is of general use.

The first in the series, which focuses on Australia and New Zealand, has just been published and others in the pipeline include guides to the USA, Canada and the Far East. All are being compiled with the support of The Holiday Care Service Charity and are endorsed by the UK's Spinal Injuries Association. *Smooth Ride Guides* are available from most large bookshops, or by sending a cheque for £9.95 (inc p&p) to FT Publishing, 44 Talbot Road, Highgate, London N6 4QP, England.



Essentials of Care

A computer package designed to train new or existing care home staff has just been launched by Care Systems.

Essentials of Care combines a manual and an IBM-compatible computer programme, and covers such issues as hygiene, institutionalisation and physical contact. The package costs £99 plus VAT and is available from Outset Publishing Ltd, Unit 8, Conqueror Industrial Estate, St Leonards on Sea, East Sussex TN38 9NA, England, telephone 0424 854124.



A progressive new Policy Statement on HIV and HIV Disease has been produced for all UK Foundation staff, volunteers and clients, in response to growing demand both within the organisation and from outside purchasers.

The Statement, which received official approval from the Care and Development Committee this March, aims to prevent discrimination against anyone known to be HIV-positive. It covers such key issues as health and safety at work, confidentiality and training and support, and includes a list of sources for further help and information.

New Treatment for Arthritis

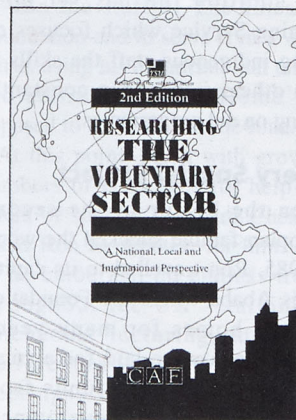
Scientists in London have discovered an effective treatment for rheumatoid arthritis – in the form of a genetically-engineered antibody.

Rheumatoid arthritis occurs when the body's immune system starts to attack joints, causing severe stiffness, swelling and pain. The new antibody works by neutralising one of the trigger chemicals, and has already proved highly successful in clinical trials. A test-group of 20 people, none of whom had benefited from existing treatments, all showed "dramatic" improvements within six weeks.

Don't get too excited, though, because the new treatment still has to undergo many more years of study and trials before it can be made generally available. Watch this space for the latest developments!

CAF Publishes Latest Research

A piece of wide-ranging research on the UK and overseas voluntary sectors has just been published by the Charities Aid Foundation. *Researching the Voluntary Sector* costs £50 hardback/£45 paperback including p&p, and is available from the CAF Publications Department at 48 Pembury Road, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 2JD, England.



Welcome to the new *Smile* section which gives you, the reader, an opportunity to air your views on a particular issue.

For this first edition, we've chosen to address what is in many countries an ongoing debate: to what extent does a person's language reflect their attitudes and beliefs? For example, many people find such terms as "handicapped" and "wheelchair-bound" highly offensive and believe them to be indicative of a discriminatory and patronising attitude, while others feel that it is not words but actions which matter.

Here, four disabled people with different backgrounds and experiences answer the question:

How Important is Terminology?

Changing Habits

I think terminology does have a bearing on your views – it can show what kind of a person you are and how you approach an issue. I don't like certain terms such as "cripple" and "handicapped" because they imply somewhat Dickensian attitudes. But most of the people who use such words don't mean any harm by them – they simply haven't thought about it. It's just a question of changing people's habits so that they get used to more acceptable terms.

I do think you can go over the top, though. For example, I don't like the phrase "physically disadvantaged" as I wouldn't describe myself as "disadvantaged" in the least. On the contrary, I've been very lucky in the things I've achieved, so how can I be disadvantaged? After all, we don't call someone an "advantaged" person because they can walk. Basically, it's all up to the individual and it's how much they put into their life that counts.

Frances Hopwood

Resident



Touching a Nerve

Of course the language we use is important; and certain words and phrases, thoughtlessly and inappropriately used, can touch a nerve and irritate out of all proportion.

However, I believe that people with disabilities who are hypersensitive to language are doing us all a disservice.

Communication is crucial to proper understanding and unity; but it cannot take place happily or profitably where

there is a fear that inadvertent use of what had seemed a perfectly acceptable term might be thought deeply offensive by the individual or group being addressed.

As disabled people, we ourselves should always use the preferred (and sensible!) terminology. But to increase awareness and understanding of disability issues and to attract public goodwill, the greater emphasis ought surely to be upon wider issues.

Muriel D. Taylor

Foundation Trustee and resident

Crucial to Rights

Using the correct language is crucial to disabled people's fight for equality and civil rights.

For disabled people, the development of a new language of disability has gone hand in hand with the development of the civil rights movement and of the new concept of disability as a social rather than a medical issue.

Using the right language is just an indicator of someone's understanding of disability – and we want others to share this understanding.

If we are to get our ideas over, it is essential that we have the right language and that we encourage others – particularly the press and media – to use that language and understand the ideas behind it.

It's only when people have the right language that they start to have the right ideas.

Michael Turner

*Freelance consultant
on disability issues*



Speak

Enormous Impact

The language used to describe disability has an enormous impact on the way disabled people are perceived and treated. We are surrounded by incorrect assumptions, stereotyping and ignorance, and these create the discrimination and prejudice which confront us in every aspect of our daily lives.

Words like "spastic", "retarded", and "defective" are often used in general conversation as terms of derision and abuse or as jokes, and this serves to reinforce damaging and incorrect assumptions.

It is up to individual disabled people to challenge stereotypes and educate the general public. There is as yet no anti-discrimination legislation in the UK, to protect people from being exploited. That means we have to start changing attitudes and behaviour from a very basic level and language is an important part of that.

Andrew Smith

Student

In the September issue, we will be asking:

How do disabled people feel about non-disabled people speaking on their behalf?

Please send your views (not more than 150 words) to the Editor by Monday, 27 June 1994.

SPAIN

Please note: Unless otherwise specified, all recipes are for four people.



Adelina Varela Vidal, a resident at Pla d'en Boet in Mataro, suggests the following for a typically Catalan main meal.

Paella Catalan

Ingredients

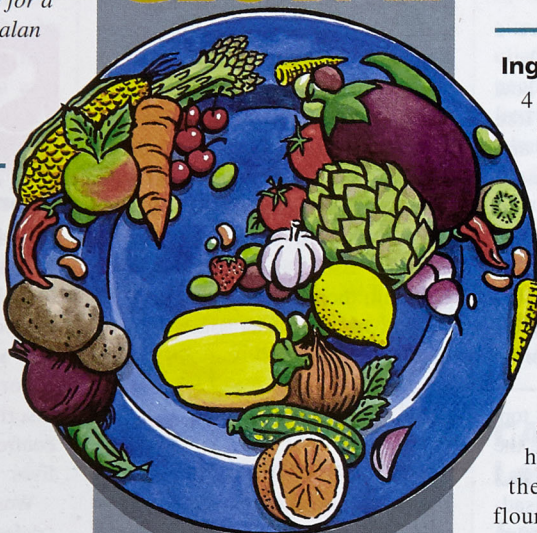
10oz/250gms rice
water
8oz/200gms diced chicken
4oz/100gms small prawns
12 mussels
1 red pepper
1 large onion
2 tomatoes
2 cloves of garlic
olive oil
pinch of saffron (optional)
sprig of parsley
salt and pepper

Method

Pour the oil into a large, deep-sided frying pan. Lightly fry the diced chicken, then add the chopped pepper, onion and prawns. Add the crushed garlic and chopped tomato and fry gently for a couple of minutes, stirring constantly. Add the rice and fry for a few minutes, still stirring. Pour in two cups of water for each cup of rice, bring to boil, then season and leave to simmer for about 30 minutes. Once all the water has evaporated, serve immediately.

N.B. Vegetarians can substitute the meat and prawns with a small bag of roasted peanuts, which should be added just before serving to prevent them going soggy.

GLOBAL



KITCHEN



PORTUGAL



Lisbon resident Alice Maria Saldana came up with this easy and unusual snack and traditional Portuguese dessert.

Batatas Recheadas (Stuffed Potatoes)

Ingredients

4 large potatoes, peeled
8oz/200gms minced meat/soya mix
2oz/50gms flour
1 egg, beaten
cooking oil

Method

Slightly under-boil the potatoes and cut them lengthways into slices. Make sandwiches with the meat/hydrated soya between two slices, then roll in the beaten egg and flour. Deep fry in very hot fat and serve with a green salad.

Pudim de Bananas (Banana Pudding)

Ingredients

6 bananas
water
small glass of white wine (optional)
2oz/50gms butter/margarine
4oz/100gms sugar
3 eggs, beaten

Method

Cook the bananas in a very little water until soft, then pass through a sieve into a bowl. Add the wine and butter and beat well, then add the sugar and beaten eggs. When the mixture is smooth, pour into a buttered soufflé (high-sided) dish and cook in a medium hot oven until well-risen and golden brown. Serve hot with cream or Greek yoghurt.

MILES OF SMILES

■ Western Region ■ Central Region ■ European and Northern Region ■ Eastern Region ■ Far Eastern Region

To show our commitment to the Foundation's work as a whole – not just in the UK but internationally – we have introduced this regular section of features on our Homes and Services all over the world.

In this issue, we look at developments in the Philippines, the Caribbean, Ethiopia, Spain and Portugal. But first, we put the spotlight on India...



Photo: Kate Buchanan

Nine-year-old Covelong resident Raju, who was found abandoned at the roadside four years ago. He's now top of his class and has ambitions to join the medical profession: "I want to be a doctor and help other poor people like me."

Spotlight India

When Leonard Cheshire arrived in India in 1955, having just spent more than two years in bed with TB, he had £100 in his pocket and two Homes to his name.

It stands as one of the greatest tributes to him, and to the determination and goodwill of the people of India, that this vast nation of more than three million square kilometres and some 200 different languages, now boasts 24 Homes – all united under the banner of Cheshire Homes India.

The Foundation in India continues to develop and expand, with four new Homes to its credit in the last two years alone and the introduction of a unique nationwide Training Programme.

Which is why, when freelance writer Kate Buchanan offered to visit some of the Homes and bring back a taste of them for *Smile*, we jumped at the chance.

In this issue, Kate gives a broad overview of the situation in India, and tries to capture the atmosphere of two Homes near Madras.

Everyone who knows a Cheshire Home knows also that the last things to make it a home are the bricks and mortar. India is the perfect example of this, for while facilities and equipment are rarely in tip-top condition, there is a prevailing atmosphere of serenity and fulfilment and you rarely see a gloomy face.

As one resident, Britto Anthony from Trivandrum in southern India, puts it: "A home without a soul is no home at all." Which explains why every residence has its own style of welcome. In Bangalore, at least a dozen children with polio tumble out on their callipers shouting 'Hello, Auntie!'. In Trivandrum, there is the rather more sedate presentation of a beautiful bouquet. At Manappakam in Madras they are into waving madly, while at Ranchi the residents compose a new song of welcome for each and every visitor.

Whatever form it takes, the welcome to a Cheshire Home in India radiates with pride. For, with so few staff and financial resources, every single resident plays an essential part in the running of their Home.

In India, staff and residents of the Cheshire Homes all live together as one huge extended family. As with any other family, there is a balance of ages and sexes, with the addition of mixed physical and mental abilities.

Just as the Cheshire movement in the UK has always been non-denominational, so Cheshire Homes in India are open to every creed.

Leonard Cheshire meets residents of the Katpadi Cheshire Home (South East India) in 1976



Photo: Norman Potter

Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, Catholics and Protestants all live together in an atmosphere of broad-minded, active spirituality. Even the two or three Homes run by Catholic sisters are steadfastly democratic in their religious practices – like the one at Ranchi, where daily prayers embrace all religions represented by the residents.

"It's fun," says Sister Teresita. "By the time we've celebrated Christmas, Holi, Diwali, national days, Easter, New Year and all our saints' days, our streamers are hardly ever in their box!"

As well as caring for their home and each other, residents are encouraged to develop personal skills and pursue a "normal" life. Young residents are encouraged to attend local schools and, increasingly, further education. Many of the young men at Manappakam gain impressive tailoring qualifications and, with full integration into society no longer a hopeless dream, most have ambitions to marry.

Indian Homes are no different from those elsewhere in that they are each responsible for seeking funds at grass-roots level, which they do with inventiveness and resourceful determination.

In Delhi, for example, families from the local community can sponsor meals in celebration of a feast day or in remembrance of a death. In Madras, the joint Honorary Secretaries Heera Rajaratnam and Maureen Murari have raised a fortune for their new Home through sheer guts and perseverance.

"We just got building and then worried where the money would come from, otherwise we would still be looking at the plans to this day, rather than at the completed building," they say.

Meanwhile, other Homes are starting to seek larger sums from fewer sources. MECON, a local engineering giant, recently adopted the Home at Ranchi and even has a full-time

.....
"The call from India...was so compelling that I should have been doing wrong to ignore it. Even though the odds seemed heavily against living up to the promise, I felt an inner conviction that it was right to make it."

*Lord Cheshire, in New Lives for Old
 by Wilfrid Russell*

for staff. The trustees would like to move towards closer relationships between the Homes with mutually beneficial initiatives, but are naturally anxious not to tamper too radically with a system that does, although sometimes by the skin of its teeth, work.

"India is very special to me," wrote the founder in a 75th Birthday message to members. Indeed, it was the country he chose for his final pilgrimage, before his death in July 1992. Given the striking similarities between those early days at Le Court, which he always looked back on with such fondness, and the spirit of the movement in India today, it is not difficult to see why. ■

staff member assigned to help run it. Meanwhile, another Home has been adopted by South India Sugars Ltd.

Without such large-scale, reliable funding, it is extremely difficult to plan growth and development. Nevertheless, significant steps have been taken in the last few years, including the recent introduction of a nationwide training programme

Potted History of Cheshire Homes India

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Spring 1954 | GC receives invitation to visit India, with view to setting up a home |
| Autumn 1955 | Arrives in Bombay with three helpers (including Margot Mason), a Land Rover and £100 in cash |
| 2nd Jan 1956 | Moves into three-bedroomed hut called Bethlehem House, in a jungle clearing near Bombay |
| Spring 1956 | GC sets off on a tour of India, looking for potential Homes and locations |
| Summer 1956 | A Spanish Order of nuns arrive to take over the now expanded Home at Bethlehem. Margot Mason and her companions leave for Dehra Dun – at the foot of the Himalayas |
| 7th Aug 1956 | "The Cheshire Homes for the Sick in India" is registered as a Society, with its Governing Council in Bombay |
| 11th Sept 1956 | Mrs Chinnadorai opens the Katpadi Home for ex-sufferers of Hansen's Disease |
| Dec 1956 | GC opens a Home for children with disabilities on a 35-acre estate at Jamshedpur |
| March 1957 | The Indian Health Minister donates a building in Delhi as a Cheshire Home |
| April 1957 | The Society changes its name to "Cheshire Homes India" and a new Trust is created with representatives all over the country |
| Jan 1959 | Inauguration of Raphael, the Ryder-Cheshire International Centre at Dehra Dun |
| April 1959 | After getting married in Bombay, GC and Sue Ryder go straight to Dehra Dun to help establish the Home |
| Feb 1964 | Opening of India's first purpose-built Home, in Bangalore |
| June 1994 | Cheshire Homes India comprises 24 Homes throughout the sub-continent, with more than 800 residents |

Miles of Smiles

This summer sees the opening of a brand new Cheshire Home in Madras, which will bring together residents from the two existing local Homes – at Manappakam and Covelong.

Kate Buchanan was just in time to visit both Homes, before they close their doors forever.

Manappakam

It could have been a catastrophe for the Cheshire Home at Manappakam, when it transpired that the Church land on which it had been situated since 1984 was to be reclaimed.

But characteristically, the Foundation's local members turned the problem to their advantage and launched a major fundraising project – resulting in a fabulous new Madras Home to be opened later this year.

No one can be in any doubt that Manappakam is in need of new

accommodation, with 37 male residents living, sleeping, working and eating in two bungalows measuring just 60 feet by 20 feet each.

Which is not to say that the residents are not happy, for they're adamant that they are. They simply despair of trying to sleep in one small room with so many people – especially when most of them snore!

During the day, though, conditions are much improved. With the aid of their prized plastic-moulding machine, trained residents can take in work producing bottle tops for a local drinks manufacturer. And then there is the constant whirring of six sewing machines, as residents run up bed sheets as piece-work for a local firm.

Originally opened in 1982 to give vocational training to residents from the Covelong Home, Manappakam's specific aim has always been to provide rehabilitation into the community for young men. Most of the residents are disabled as a result of contracting polio, and can easily support themselves given the chance to learn a skill.

Any structural disadvantages which Manappakam may have are partially counteracted by the very

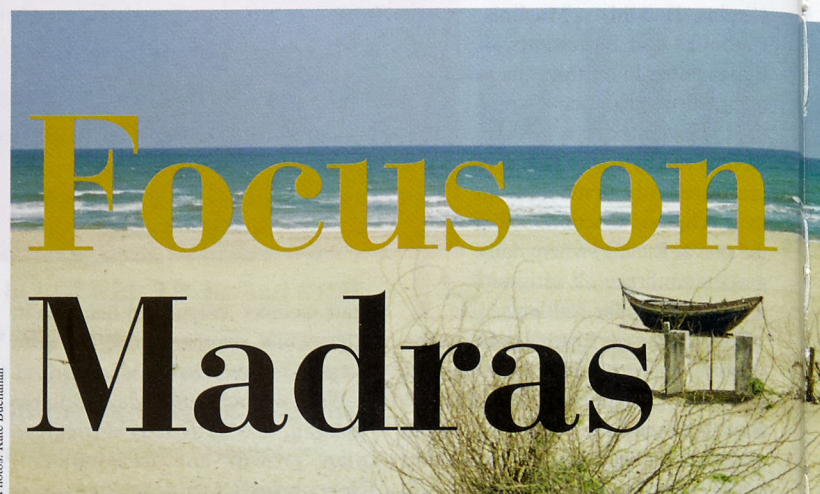
large input of professional social work. This includes a professional social worker based permanently at the Home, an assistant social worker, and a supervising social worker with responsibility for both the Madras Homes.

Far from abandoning this system with the move, local representatives are

determined to extend the provision of trained staff. Heera Rajaratnam, joint Honorary Secretary in Madras, is particularly keen on acquiring a physiotherapist and an occupational therapist for people with learning disabilities.

Everyone is optimistic about the move – especially the forthcoming integration with women and girls, since such a mix is obviously reflective of "normal" life in the community.

The Home's many achievements to date stand as a tribute to the hard work of residents, staff and volunteers. Gunasevaran, for example, is one of many ambitious residents who, with the support of his social workers, has just received a profes-



Photos: Kate Buchanan



Plastic-moulding at Manappakam

sional qualification in tailoring and is all set to make his own living.

Even in their present conditions, the residents and staff of Manappakam are full of energy and optimism. Once settled into their splendid new surroundings, there will be no limit to what they can achieve!

Covelong

An hour and a half down a bumpy coast road from the city of Madras lies what must be one of the most extraordinary Cheshire Homes in the world. For, situated at the heart of a tiny seaside hamlet called Covelong, is the dilapidated but beautiful Home of **Anbu Nilayam** – the “Abode of Love”.

Originally built as a 17th-century Portuguese Summer Palace, this building has been a Cheshire Home since 1958 and now caters for 35 residents.

Here, from a large, pillared atrium, you step out onto miles of white sandy beaches bordered by palm trees, and an infinity of sparkling blue water. A lovely sea breeze

blows continually through the building, enhancing the tranquil, uplifting atmosphere of this strangely-located Home.

Amazingly, the entire community is overseen by one woman – Sister Mary Matthews, a Roman Catholic who worked for many years as a nun with Mother Teresa and who has devoted the past eight years to Covelong.

Every day, she and a team of helpers get to grips with the Home’s vegetable garden. Last year, they grew and ate 200 kilograms of tomatoes and sold a further 100 kilos! Home-grown chillis, bananas,

and doormats to bring in much-needed income.

Covelong may be a spectacular setting, but it is also a harsh one. Even the refreshing sea-breeze is full of corrosive salt. The walls – which were whitewashed by a volunteer just two years ago – are in a sorry state, while the TV and radio have already succumbed to the elements.

At least one problem has been conquered, though. When Mary first arrived here eight years ago, cows and dogs would wander in from the beach for some shade, but she has now erected fencing to stop such intrusions.



Covelong’s “Abode of Love”

cauliflowers, pumpkins and lettuces are regularly on the menu, while fresh eggs are produced by 24 squawking hens.

The youngest resident here is nine years old – a boy named Raju who was found abandoned in the street, covered in cigarette burns and unbearably thin. Nowadays, he is top of his class at the local school and leads prayers in the house every evening.

Other residents have physical or learning disabilities, and are of all ages and both sexes. One has lived here for 30 years!

In addition to helping with the cooking and cleaning, those residents who do not attend school have launched a mini-industry of their own. They make beautiful hanging curtains from sea shells they collect, then sell them along with wire bags

Ironically, for a seaside Home, it is water which presents the biggest problem in the blistering heat of summer. The entire hamlet relies on a single well, which Mary pumps for an hour at 1 o’clock every morning in order to be sure of an adequate supply.

“This place is hard work 24 hours a day, but I love it and I feel so inspired by Lord Cheshire’s mission,” she says.

Nonetheless, it is perhaps no bad thing that the residents will soon be moving to their newly-built Home nearer Madras. Though surrounded by nature and beauty, Covelong is literally crumbling around their ears and it is time to move on. ■

Kate will be reporting back from other areas of India for future issues of Smile.



Mary Matthews tends Covelong’s abundant vegetable garden

Filipino Flyers

The Cheshire Home movement in the Philippines started in 1965, with the birth of **Sinag-Tala** ("Star of Hope") – a simple, rented house in a suburb of Manila.

Today, there are no less than 22 Cheshire Homes scattered across some of the 7,100 islands which make up the Philippines. Grouped under the umbrella of the Philippine Council of Homes for the Disabled (PHILCOCHED), they range in size from three to 20 residents, and all aim to encourage independent living.

Bahay Mapagmahal, for example, caters for children between the ages of 7 and 16 who have polio and who mostly come from remote mountainous regions of the country. The Home has gone out of its way to

encourage individual talent, with the creation of a "Rondalla on Wheels" – a group which plays folk, popular and classical music. The group has now achieved international acclaim and in April 1992 travelled all the way to Germany to give a concert.

Entrepreneurial Spirit

In addition, there is **Tahanang Walang Hagdanan** – "The House With no Steps" – which, though not a Cheshire Home, is affiliated to PHILCOCHED.

This highly commercial project was set up in 1976 and now employs some 150 people in a variety of industries – from furniture-making and metalwork, to glass engraving and pig farming! The scheme is run entirely by disabled people and is

believed to be one of the best self-help projects in the whole of the developing world.

In fact, each and every Home in the Philippines has developed a specific money-earning industry, with some of the resulting products so popular that they are now being marketed abroad.

This entrepreneurial spirit has proved a life-saver for the organisation, as donations are few and far-between and the Homes need every penny they can get.

Leap of Hope

Which is why the resident of a UK Home has decided to raise £10,000 for the Philippines by jumping out of a plane!

David Hassell, who has lived at St Michael's Cheshire Home in Somerset for the past seven years,



The talented members of Bahay Mapagmahal's "Rondalla on Wheels", which performed in Germany in 1992

Miles of Smiles



Photo: Mid Somerset Newspapers

David Hassell, who is aiming to raise £10,000 for Cheshire Homes in the Philippines

says he was inspired to do the parachute jump by Leonard Cheshire himself.

"I woke up one morning and realised that I needed to do something other than fundraise for a particular charity every year, and had

to concentrate on doing something for the Foundation itself," he says.

"I believe that GC wanted us to help the Third World and, because I knew we were twinned with a Filipino Home, I felt I needed to do something for that area in particular."



At the moment, David is still in the initial stages of his project. But he hopes to gain a clearer picture of exactly what the Filipino Homes need when he meets five of their representatives at this month's World Week.

"I have to be able to describe the needs of people in the Philippines in order to raise money, and this is the ideal opportunity to find out more about the Homes over there," he explains.

David will spend most of this year collecting pledges for the parachute jump, and hopes to arrive in the Philippines with his hard-earned cash by the end of 1995. One Home he is looking forward to visiting in particular is **Bahay Liwanag**, or "Home of Light", with which St Michael's is twinned. Founded in 1974, the Home is situated near Manila and caters for eight residents with severe physical or learning disabilities.

.....
"World Week is the ideal opportunity to find out more about the Homes over there."

David is now appealing to other individuals and Homes – especially those which are also twinned with Homes in the Philippines – to help him by taking sponsorship forms and by donating air miles.

"I see this as a tremendous opportunity for raising the profile of the Foundation as a whole, so it would be wonderful to get support from as many people as possible," he says.

David can be contacted by writing to him at St Michael's Cheshire Home, Cheddar Road, Axbridge, Somerset, BS26 2DW, England. ■

Residents of Bahay Kakayahan, celebrating the Home's recent Silver Jubilee in style

Caring in the Caribbean

Earlier this year, the Foundation's Director General James Stanford took time out from his 30th Wedding Anniversary "honeymoon" to visit several of our Homes and Services in the Caribbean.

One of the highlights of his trip was a visit to **The Cheshire Village** in Kingston, Jamaica, where he met international athlete Minette Wilson. Minette, who is also Chair of the Residents' Committee and Jamaica's representative at this year's World Week, has competed in numerous paraplegic events all over the world – and has the medals to prove it!

"It is no exaggeration to say that I could not pick up single-handedly all her awards for athletics – one of which is the world record for javelin-throwing!" said James.

Minette is one of 100 residents – both disabled and able-bodied – at the Village, which was opened by Leonard Cheshire in 1975. All of the 20 houses here are designed specifically for wheelchair users, with rents from those who work helping to subsidise the whole community. As far as possible, able-bodied residents are chosen because they have some relationship to those who are disabled and can help out in emergencies.



Trinidad and Tobago

From Jamaica, James and his wife travelled to Trinidad and Tobago – the two southernmost islands of the Lesser Antilles. **The Cheshire Home** here is sending no less than



International athlete Minette Wilson in the grounds of the Jamaican Cheshire Home

Photo: J. Stanford



View with a Room - the scene from Grenada's Cheshire Home, looking across the Caribbean Sea to the Grenadine islands

three representatives to World Week – public relations officer Barbara Caesar and residents Judith and Deo Raj.

This spacious Home is located on the outskirts of San Fernando town and caters for physically disabled people of all ages. Residents have their own rooms and are actively encouraged to work or receive education outside the Home, while part of the premises is used by another voluntary organisation as a school for children with learning disabilities.

And on to Grenada

Next on the Stanfords' itinerary was **Father Hilarion Home** in Grenada, which has a fairly dramatic history.

As its name suggests, the Home was founded by an American priest called Father Hilarion, who found a destitute and dying old man in the local village. Despite his attempts to care for him, the old man died and the priest vowed that from then on, no elderly person should be without a home. Funds were raised in the US and the Home was opened in 1971, under a group of American nuns.

Tragically, Father Hilarion drowned just one day after the opening of the Home, and was buried in the grounds.

The nuns remained until the Marxist government forced them to return to the US in the late 1970s. The Home then became locally staffed and has remained so ever since, although the current matron, Esther Atoe, comes from Nigeria.

All the funds for the Home are local donations from the parish of St Patrick – a small fishing community in the north of Grenada. But with local employment running at 45 per cent and most people on very low incomes, the Home has no money for anything more than the basic essentials.

In spite of this, the staff and 24 residents are making a determined effort to improve facilities and quality of life.

Giving his impressions of the Home, James said: "We were immensely encouraged by the progress that has been made over the past year, and especially the very positive attitude towards resident participation on a daily basis."

It is a progress no doubt inspired not only by the Founder, but also by the Home's magnificent view of the Grenadines as they rise from the Caribbean Sea. Which is probably the best "facility" that anyone could ever hope for! ■



Members of the Management Committee, Trinidad Cheshire Home



Ronald Travers visits the children's Day Centre at Entoto, shortly before its official opening in April

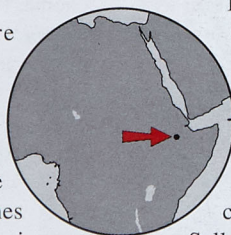
Making a Difference

Nine years ago, as a direct result of Ethiopia's second great drought and famine, a unique project for the Foundation was set up in Addis Ababa.

The Leonard Cheshire Foundation had already been operating in Ethiopia since 1962, when the first Cheshire Home was opened 20 miles outside the capital. Another two Homes and a clinic had sprung up since then, but there was as yet no project to help the local population in general.

So it was that, in March 1985, a small Feeding Centre was constructed in an area of Addis Ababa called Entoto.

Entoto is located on the northern edge of the city and consists of 12 *Kebeles* (districts), with a total population of 62,000. Most of the local residents depend on pottery and weaving for their livelihood, and spend much of their time collecting eucalyptus leaves for fuel. The average local income is extremely low and many of the children are underweight, as their mothers do not have enough milk to breastfeed them properly.



The Feeding Centre set up a highly successful nutrition and health project and, in 1988, came under the exclusive remit of Cheshire Foundation Ethiopia and its national co-ordinator Negussie Sellassie. It is now funded by several agencies operating in the country, including Save the Children, Ethiopiaid and the World Food Programme.

Today, the Centre's Nutrition Rehabilitation Programme caters for some 7,000 mothers with children

under the age of five. All are provided with food and pre-school education while their mothers attend lectures on health.

The Centre also carries out a great deal of community work and development programmes. Recently these have included the construction of 14 water points in convenient locations – a Godsend for local mothers who often have to walk long distances to fetch water. Some 510 closed stoves have been installed in local houses, more than 170 ventilated pit latrines have been constructed in the community, and local residents have helped to build some 750 metres of internal roads in a bid to improve communications.

In addition to this, the Foundation has recently opened a day centre, where parents can leave their children while they go out to work.

Training for all

One of the most important recent developments came in March of this year, when Addis Ababa hosted its first ever training workshop for Cheshire Foundation staff in both Ethiopia and Eritrea.

This was conducted by our international Training and Rehabilitation Adviser Sarah Holloway, who takes her expertise all over the world and has developed a specialised training programme for Cheshire Homes in Africa.



Child being weighed as part of a monthly progress check at Entoto's Feeding Centre



Mother receiving monthly food supplies from staff at the Feeding Centre in Addis Ababa

A central feature of the programme has been the production of a video course entitled "Learning Together", for staff working with children who have cerebral palsy. Designed for use throughout Africa, the video is a result of collaboration between the Leonard Cheshire Foundation International and the Cheshire Homes in Southern Africa.

A total of 16 participants attended the workshop, including delegates from four other agencies working in Ethiopia.

"It was the first time that personnel from the different Cheshire Homes

had come together to share ideas and expertise, and the opportunity to share these with personnel from other agencies enhanced the value of the experience," says Sarah.

Sarah hopes the training will enable Foundation staff to share their rehabilitation skills with other agencies undertaking disability programmes in the community.

"If all goes well, this will be just the first of many training initiatives in Ethiopia and Eritrea, which will help to promote better understanding of disability and the surrounding issues," she said. ■

Spain-

Sun, Sand and Self-Determination

When the **Asociación Hogares de la Amistad** was first created at the end of 1968, Spain was very different from the forward-thinking, business-minded and technology-based country that it is today.

It is, therefore, to the great credit of its employees and representatives that the organisation has succeeded, not just in adapting to the many changes of the past 25 years but in actually instigating many important developments.

All but one of the Asociación's five Homes are located in or around Barcelona – capital of the eastern region of Cataluña, which has its own language and government, or *Generalitat*.



Tarragona's computer chess fanatic Carlos Balaña, who also writes for the local community magazine

It is these Homes which are spearheading the provision of high-quality accommodation and care in Spain, with every single one at 100 per cent capacity with a long waiting list. The *Generalitat* holds the organisation's work in such high esteem that it has paid for most of the buildings and conversions itself, on the condition that the Asociación agrees to run them. And Princess Elena, a prominent member of Spain's royal family, has officially registered her support by agreeing to become patron.

It only takes a short visit to any one of the Homes to understand why. For, while the sheer size of many of these houses may seem an obstacle to the creation of a family atmosphere, it is one which has been overcome thanks to the determination of residents and staff alike.

A Case in Point

The prime example of this is at **Hogar San Salvador**, located in a lively suburb of Tarragona looking out across beautiful pine-clad hillsides. Most of the 30 residents are tetraplegic, and all have access to a large and extremely well-equipped computer room and workshop. Here, they are able to develop skills and talents which might otherwise never have come to light – from graphic design and journalism to fine art and tapestry.

However, the key to San Salvador's happy and stimulating atmosphere lies in the fact that its residents are totally integrated into the local community. As the Asociación's Director General, Carmen Masriera, explained: "The locals have accepted the residents without reservation and vice versa. It means that everyone can come and go as they please, and the local morning market is a particular attraction."

Another Home whose friendly, family atmosphere belies the fact that it caters for 24 full-time plus 22 daytime residents, is **Hogar la Gavina** in Alella – a coastal town just outside Barcelona. All the clients here have cerebral palsy and, for the most part, had minimal skills and no self-confidence when they first arrived.

Indeed, before the Home was taken over from a local organisation in 1990, its residents were employed for highly monotonous piece-work. In those four short years, the whole place has been totally transformed

into a youthful community, where each resident decides for themselves the particular hobbies, sports and pastimes they wish to pursue. This has led to some fantastic achievements and an impressive

array of trophies from local, regional and national sporting events. These have included numerous Boccia and athletics championships – such as last year's Robin Hood Games in Nottingham, where resident Elvira Garro won the 100m race and came second in the 200m.

Another Barcelona Home which provides a range of activities for its residents is **Hogar Bonanova**, which is at present the only Home to be completely owned by the Asociación. Computer studies are especially popular, and a volunteer IT teacher comes into the workshop one day a week. The house is keen to





The close relationship between residents and care workers is an integral feature of Hogar la Gavina, near Barcelona

encourage independence and possesses a satellite house for three people in the centre of town.

Odd-Man-Out

Such is the determination of Spain's Asociación that even its odd-man-out – **Parc Serentill**, a Home for elderly people in Badalona – has proved an unexpected success for its 56 residents and 25 day centre users.

Their appreciation of the care, facilities and high standards is summed up by residents Pedro Serra (86) and Carme Noguera (83), who have been married for an amazing 63 years and obviously feel very much at home. "We've been here three years, and it's by far the best place in Spain. The carers are so attentive and there's nowhere else where we could have had a flat of our own but with the support we need," says Pedro.

Pressing Ahead

In spite of such high praise, the Asociación refuses to rest on its

laurels and is instead pressing ahead with a programme of expansion and development.

The nine residents of Mataró's **Hogar Pla d'en Boet**, for example, have just moved into a new building, while their former Home next door has undergone complete refurbishment and renovation for 11 more



Parc Serentill residents Pedro Serra and Carme Noguera: "It's by far the best place in Spain"

people with a range of physical disabilities.

Projects for the future include the purchase of a *massia* or country house just outside Barcelona, plus

the conversion of an old city school into a residence and day centre. Once again, the *Generalitat* has registered its approval by providing a substantial grant towards the purchase and conversion of the school, and it is hoped that the new Home will be up and running by the end of 1995.

The Asociación is currently planning a major fund and awareness-raising campaign – vital in a country like Spain which has no tradition of donating to independent voluntary organisations.

Vice President Amparo de Fabra explains the importance of raising the organisation's profile: "We get an enormous amount of applications [from people wanting to become residents or users] because of the reputation of our Homes. The demand is such that we have to be on the lookout for new sites and opportunities all the time, in order to extend our operation. We are always looking for help and support, so the more people who know about us and the work we do, the better."

One thing which is certain is that the Asociación is providing a service available nowhere else in Spain, and it is thanks to this that its standing and reputation have grown consistently over the last 25 years.

The organisation still has a long way to go, if it is to spread its message and operations across the whole of this vast and incredibly diverse country. But however long it takes, its members and representatives are determined to develop and extend the choices offered to disabled people in Spain, and to raise their expectations for a fulfilling life. ■

Portugal - People First



Residents of Lares da Boa Vontade in front of their abundant loquat tree. (Left to Right: Jose da Corta, Elvira Neto, Alice Saldaña and Antonio Melo)

When Leonard Cheshire first visited Portugal in 1959, to explain his beliefs and the setting up of a Home, he amazed his audience with the assertion that: "You do not need to worry about money, only people".

Rosemary Leitao was among that first audience, and remembers her feelings of scepticism at the time. Now Vice Chairman of the Cheshire Foundation in Portugal, she has spent the past 35 years discovering exactly what he meant: "He was perfectly right, of course. What you need is people and once you've got them, you're alright".

It is this preoccupation with the individual above all else which has given the residents of Portugal's only Home - **Lares da Boa Vontade** - a very strong sense of community and of self-determination. It is highly significant, for example, that while funds for additional fittings and facilities have always been short, the Home has spawned no less than four marriages since it first opened in 1963.

Now situated in Carcavelos, a small coastal suburb of Lisbon, Lares da Boa Vontade is the only Home of

its kind in the whole of Portugal. Catering for a total of 32 residents with physical and learning disabilities, the Home offers a range of activities as well as classes in English, sewing and yoga.

"There's no residential Home as fine as this one anywhere in Portugal," says Rosemary. "It's true that quite a lot is done in this country for children, but the question is what happens when those children grow up?"

Resident Irene Pereira, who is coming to London this month for World Week, agreed that there are few facilities for disabled people which are of an acceptable standard.

"It's generally very bad, with some people forced to live in the most horrific conditions simply to keep them out of the way. Independent living for disabled people isn't even a concept in Portugal yet, and as far as organised Homes go, Carcavelos has far higher standards than any of the others," she says.

Irene, who contracted polio as a young child, is an example of how someone with enough courage and determination can succeed even in the most hostile of environments.

Having spent the first 20 years of her life in hospital, she went on to secure herself a high level of education and has just started a part-time job, giving advice and information to disabled people in the local community. Along with another resident, Antonio Manuel Melo, she gives talks at national and international conferences on a variety of disability issues and is extremely knowledgeable about the status of disabled people in other countries around the world.

However good the spirit within Lisbon's Home, though, there are certain services which would make a huge difference to the quality of life of its residents. The most obvious of these is the acquisition of an adapted van for, while the local rail service is accessible, most of the residents would appreciate not having to plan each outing with the precision of a military campaign!

Rosemary Leitao and Chairman Ian Crocker are battling hard to raise more money, with the help of new recruit Angela Esteves Almeida. Angela, who is originally from Poole in Dorset, has orchestrated a number of unusual fundraising events since coming to the organisation 18 months ago. These have included two separate weekend courses on "Positive Thinking", where the fees charged to outsiders not only raise money for the Home but also enable residents to attend free.

Nevertheless, much of the work here is still done on a shoestring, with the organisation having to fight tooth and nail for every concession, facility and allowance. It is a fight which is helping an ever-greater number of people to gain a sense of self-respect, and a determination to take their rightful place in Portuguese society. ■

JUNE

4 June

International Day Against Child Cruelty

United Nations awareness day for child victims of aggression.

6-13 June

World Week

Venue: London and Le Court Cheshire Home in Hampshire, England.

13-16 June

The 25th International Conference on Epilepsy

Venue: Burton Manor College, The Wirral, Cheshire, England. Contact Jill Pooley at the British Epilepsy Association, Anstey House, 40 Hanover Square, Leeds LS3 1BE, England. Tel: 0532 439393.

17 June

Mental Health Foundation Conference

On the legal issues surrounding the care, control and safety of children with learning disabilities and severe challenging behaviour.

Venue: The Wellcome Trust, central London, England. Cost: £15. Contact Aileen Norman at the Mental Health Foundation, 37 Mortimer Street, London W1N 7RJ.

Venue: Birmingham, England. Contact Henry Gibbon at 91 Bonsall Road, Erdington, Birmingham B23 5SX, England.

JULY

4-7 July

Towards the Year 2000: The Role of the Third Sector

Conference organised by the International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR).

Venue: Pecs, Hungary. Contact Margery Danils on 010 410 516 4678.

11 July

World Population Day

Annual United Nations observance day, highlighting demographic problems.

25-28 July

European Schools Sports Athletics Championships for the Blind

With more than 350 visually-impaired children from all over Europe taking part in a wide range of events, including athletics and goalball.

Venue: Linden Lodge in South London, England.

28-29 July

Quality Services in the Year of the Family

An international conference and exhibition, organised by the National Deaf Children's Society.

Venue: Southampton University, England. Contact the NDCS Conference Office, Poppy Cottage, South Hill, Droxford, Southampton SO3 IPT, England. Tel: 0489 87747.

30 July - 6 August

Baptist PHAB Week

A week of activities and events for young disabled people between the ages of 16 and 25.

SEPTEMBER

4-9 September

6th European Regional Conference of Rehabilitation International

Organised by the Hungarian Society for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled, to focus on quality of life and the essential role of rehabilitation within this theme.

Venue: Budapest, Hungary. Contact ISM Ltd, The Old Vicarage, Haley Hill, Halifax HX3 6DR, England or ISM Europe Kft, 1012 Budapest, Logodiu. 6, Hungary.

14-17 September
REHAB '94

The 8th International Exhibition for Care, Rehabilitation and Integration, with some 425 exhibitors from all over the world.

Venue: Karlsruhe, Germany. Contact Christiana Hennemann, Provinzialstr.329, D-44388 Dortmund, Germany.

19-22 September

BILD Annual Conference

On "Working with Families: Changing Lifestyles and Changing Needs". Topics to include new ways of working with people with learning disabilities, severe challenging behaviour and abuse.

Venue: St Nicholas Hotel, Scarborough, England. Contact BILD (the British Institute of Learning Disabilities) at Wolverhampton Road, Kidderminster, Worcs DY10 3PP, England.

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Taylor-Made

We take an in-depth look at Oxford's pioneering house for students with disabilities.

Choosing the right education course and college is problematic for any student, but for someone with a disability it can turn into a hugely complicated and disheartening chore.

Just trying to figure out which colleges combine the best course with sufficient accessibility, suitable accommodation and the necessary facilities can begin to seem like an insurmountable barrier to continuing education.

However, one place exists which caters specifically for disabled students and as such provides a service which should be available everywhere.

Established in 1975, Taylor House is part of The Leonard Cheshire Foundation, but first and foremost it is just another student residence which happens to cater for particular needs.

Located in the centre of Headington, just outside Oxford and very close to Brookes University, it looks at first glance like any other detached house.

It is only on closer inspection that you notice the extra facilities and adaptations which help to ensure that life for its four residents is as normal and uncomplicated as possible. In

fact, the house has been extended and equipped to provide complete care, with a GP's surgery nearby and district nurses available to visit when necessary.

Supported Independence

The specific aim of Taylor House is to provide appropriate accommodation for four young people with severe physical disabilities who are studying at any of Oxford's establishments of higher or further education. Each student has their own

room, while care and support are provided round-the-clock by four recent graduates who in turn gain a recognised form of pre-social work training. And the fact that everyone in the house –

students and carers alike – is in their twenties, helps to maintain the house's lively and informal atmosphere.

Sandra Grint, who was recently appointed as the house's part-time – and extremely unobtrusive – manager, believes the project to be one of a kind.

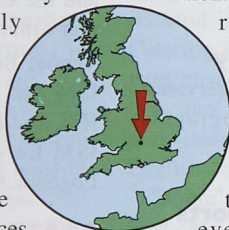
"It is certainly unique to have students living in an ordinary student residence, which nevertheless takes into account and caters for their disabilities," she says.

"The students just want to get on with their lives and, while we have to keep to certain standards because we're registered with the Social Services, it is a very informal set-up."

Something More Challenging

One of the residents, 24-year-old Janet Walker, is studying for a GNVQ Level 3 in Business and Finance at Oxford's College of Further Education. She came here after three years at the Star Centre – an independent college for disabled people in Cheltenham.

"I just felt it was time to move on to something more challenging," she says. "This is better for me because I have support 24 hours a day and we're all about the same age. We're not told what to do and can carry on with our normal lives, though we do try to work as a team," she says.



A panoramic view of Oxford's "Dreaming Spires"





Photos: Eddie Kyle-Hodges

Manager Sandra Grint with carer Craig Barton and students Trevor French and Darren Hackleton

The three male residents – Trevor French (28), Darren Hackleton (26) and Andy Smith (27), are all studying for joint honours degrees at Oxford Brookes University, with which Taylor House has a long-standing relationship.

Trevor is studying English and History and makes sure he stays as independent as possible.

"It's not at all like an institution here – it's very informal and there are no rules. You can just go out when you want, and we each do our own shopping. In fact, you wouldn't know it was a house for disabled people – it's just like any other house in the suburbs," he says.

Andy is studying History and Politics, with a view to becoming a secondary school history teacher. He heard about Taylor House while at Stoke Mandeville and is adamant

that it gave him the chance he needed.

"Without Taylor House, there's no way I could have taken this course because, although many colleges are making efforts to adapt, what they consider to be accessible isn't always really enough.

"Coming here was excellent, and it has given me opportunities which I probably wouldn't have had otherwise," he says.

Darren is in the final year of his BSc in Statistics and Intelligent Systems – which he describes as a combination of psychology and computer technology. He plans to take a Masters at Warwick University, where the halls of residence have some rooms adapted for disabled people, but is convinced that without Taylor House he would never have had the confidence to try this.

"I would definitely recommend it here, because it's a good bridge between living at home and living independently. It's very supportive and helped to build up my confidence, so that now I feel ready to branch out a bit more and become more self-reliant."

Andy and Darren are now preparing to leave Taylor House and join their many predecessors who have qualified for careers and gone on to lead independent lives.

Which means that, from this autumn, two more people will have the opportunity to take up a course of studies in Oxford.

Applications are welcome from young disabled people all over the world, regardless of their chosen course. For further information, please write as soon as possible to The Manager at Taylor House, 16 Osler Road, Headington, Oxford OX3 9BJ, England. ■



Intelligent systems: Darren Hackleton processes coursework on his PC

For general details about higher and further education courses in Britain, look in the *Official Guide to University and College Entrance* (there should be a copy in the reference section of your local library). This contains a section on "Students with Special Needs", which addresses such issues as accessibility and allowances.

SKILL – the National Bureau for Students with Disabilities – has produced a *Guide to Higher Education for People with Disabilities*. Copies of this, and further information, are available from SKILL at 336 Brixton Road, London SW9 7AA, England. Tel: 071-274 0565 (2-5pm only).



Photo: Chris Donaghue, The Oxford Photo Library

John Crowhurst from **Seven Springs Cheshire Home** in Kent, England, reports the following:

"On 5 November 1993, **Dorothy Douglas** passed away. Dorothy, who contracted polio while the young mother of three sons, came to Seven Springs in August 1972.

"During her time here, she was Residents' Representative several times and was involved in the local Womens' Institute. She was also a keen painter and pony driver, and made numerous trips to see her sons in Australia.

"Dorothy's faith was a great comfort to her and helped her enormously towards the end of her days. Her courage and determination to live life to the full were a wonderful example, and her consideration and compassion will be very greatly missed."

"**Don Wilson** died peacefully on 24 October 1993 after only a short stay at Seven Springs. He was a local Tunbridge Wells man who came to us after spending nearly a year in Stoke Mandeville. Although we had not had time to get to know him well, we knew how pleased Don was to be back in his home town."

"**Lorna Ridgway** became a member of the Seven Springs management committee in 1979 and Chairperson in 1982.

"Over the years, she was responsible for setting up a variety of activities and projects – including a music group and a computer aid scheme.

"Lorna will be missed by everyone at Seven Springs, but her memory will live on."

The Grove Cheshire Home in Norwich, England, records with sadness the deaths of three much-loved residents:

Kathy Harbord, who died peacefully on 13 January 1994 aged 86 years. Kathy had been a resident at The Grove since June 1962 – arriving just six months after it opened. She had watched the Home grow and develop

and worked hard to raise funds. Her passing marks the end of an era.

John Dean, who died suddenly on 9 January 1994 aged 51 years. John had lived at The Grove since December 1988. He was a very friendly man and will be remembered for his sense of humour.

Derek Gay, who passed away peacefully on 17 February 1994 aged 58 years. Derek had been a resident at The Grove since November 1982 and for several years shared a room with John, with whom he had a special friendship which sustained him through several bouts of illness.

The Grove also reports the death, in February 1994, of its Vice-President, **Dr Irene Green**. Irene was involved with the Home almost from the beginning 30 years ago, and she was an active member of the Management Committee for many years. She often visited The Grove and took an interest in its residents even after her retirement. She will be sadly missed.

January brought two deaths within 24 hours of each other to **The Leonard Cheshire Home of Gloucestershire**, England.

Kathy Miles, who was 68, had lived in the Home for 10 years and brought with her a great warmth, kindness and humour. She was also a talented artist and needle woman.

John Searle, who was from Bath, contracted multiple sclerosis 10 years ago and had lived in the Home for 18 months.

From the **Belfast Cheshire House** in Northern Ireland, Stuart Walker writes to announce the death of fellow resident **Noel McAllister** in February 1994, at the age of 36.

"Noel was one of the first residents of Cheshire House when it opened in June 1983, and was the first to welcome me when I came to live here 18 months later.

"He was a man whose generosity was well-known among his wide circle of friends, both inside and outside Cheshire House.

"Noel always wished to remain as independent as possible, which he did with dignity to the end."

Freddie Wilson MBE, Head of Home at **Hovenden House** in Lincolnshire, writes the following:

"It is with a sense of loss that I record the death of **Albert Stancer**.

"Having worked on a farm and then for a local firm, Albert changed career direction 22 years ago and became care assistant, and subsequently driver, at Hovenden House. When he retired from full-time employment, he became manager of the residents' shop until his recent death.

"In all three positions, Albert gave wholeheartedly of himself, displaying all those attributes which go to make up a true carer. He was well-loved and will be missed enormously by everyone."

Heather Thompson, Head of Care at **Chipstead Lake Cheshire Home**, writes the following tribute:

Michael Howse died peacefully in his sleep on 4 March 1994. He had been a resident at Chipstead Lake Cheshire Home for five years and his easy-going nature and personal charm made him a pleasure to care for. No matter how steep the hill, Mick's will to live overcame the challenge.

We extend our deepest sympathy to Mick's wife Scarlett, their twin sons Carl and Patrick, his parents and family, who all became part of the Home. He will be sadly missed.

